

AB Court Reporting & Video

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New,
Reconstructed, and Modified Sources Reconsideration

8:00 a.m. - 3:07 p.m.
Room B, Bison

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EPA Region 8 Office
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

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EPA PANEL MEMBERS:

Session One

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and Standards

Melissa Weitz, Office of Atmospheric Programs

Jonathan Witt, Office of Air Quality Planning and
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Session Two

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Session Three

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(The following session is being heard by EPA Panel members Steve Fruh, Melissa Weitz and Jonathan Witt.)

MR. FRUH: Good morning, everyone. We will get started now. My name is Steve Fruh, I am a group leader in the Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards. I am one of the chairs for today's public hearing on EPA's Targeted Improvements to the 2016 New Source Performance Standards for the Oil and Gas Industry. Welcome and thank you for coming today.

We have a couple of other panelists. I am going to let them introduce themselves.

MS. WEITZ: Good morning, I'm Melissa Weitz, I am with the EPA's Office of Atmospheric Programs.

MR. WITT: And I'm Jonathan Witt, and I am also in the -- the Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards.

MR. FRUH: So today's hearing is an opportunity to offer input on the proposed amendments. The proposed changes include the frequency of monitoring for fugitive emissions, also known as "leaks," at well sites and compressor stations; the requirements for pneumatic pumps at well sites are also proposed amendments, and requirements that a professional engineer is certified when meeting those requirements is technically infeasible.

1 In addition, this proposal addresses implementation
2 issues and makes technical corrections and amendments to
3 further clarify the rule.

4 I would like to thank you for taking the time out
5 off your day today to join us and share your comments.

6 We should go over some of the ground rules for the
7 public hearing today. We have many people signed up, and
8 before we begin I would like to go through the ground rules so
9 that we can make today's hearing run smoothly.

10 First, please be sure that you have checked in at
11 the registration desk, even if you're not planning to speak
12 today. If you've signed up to speak, but haven't told us that
13 you're here, please step out and go to the registration desk
14 and let an EPA staffer know that you've arrived.

15 Second, if you're a speaker, you are given a room
16 number and Room A is Bitterroot, Room B is Bison. This is Room
17 B, Bison. If your -- hopefully you're in the right room. If
18 not, this would be a good time to make your way over to the
19 other room, which is just out the door, down the hall, next
20 room over.

21 Here is how today's hearing will work. If you're a
22 speaker, you were given a speaker number, one, two, three, et
23 cetera. When your number is called, come to the front of the
24 room near the podium. There are chairs available for waiting
25 your turn to speak. When it's your turn to speak, please come

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1 to the podium, state your name, spell it for the court
2 reporter. Your comments will be transcribed and included in
3 the record of comments on these actions.

4 Each speaker will be given five minutes to give
5 their comments. We have a light to let you know how much time
6 you have left. When the light turns from green to yellow, that
7 means you have one minute remaining. When it turns red, that
8 signals it's time to wrap up your testimony. The light will
9 flash red when you have spoken for five minutes and it is time
10 to stop. We are here to listen to you today; however, a panel
11 member may ask questions to clarify your comments, but it's not
12 a debate, we don't intend to engage the pros and cons.

13 When you are finished speaking, we will call up the
14 next number for the next speaker. If you brought a written
15 copy of your testimony, please give it to the staff at the
16 registration desk before you leave today. Because of the
17 number of people who signed up to speak today, and to be fair
18 to everyone, we are going to strictly enforce the five-minute
19 limit.

20 If you have additional comments you would like to
21 make you may submit them in writing. And, of course, written
22 comments are just as valid as verbal comments. Let me assure
23 you EPA gives equal consideration to comments we received in
24 writing as well as those presented at public hearing.

25 Instructions for submitting material to the docket

1 are on available at the registration desk and on the EPA's
2 website. Comments must be received on or before December 17,
3 2018. Any written comments submitted today will be placed in
4 the official docket for the proposed amendments.

5 Today's hearing will conclude at 8:00 p.m. We will
6 take short breaks throughout the day as needed. If you have
7 any questions during the day, please see the registration table
8 staff working at the table.

9 Finally, I want to ask each of you to please be
10 respectful of everyone who speaks today. We have people with a
11 wide variety of views in the audience, and we want to hear from
12 all of you. So that we can do that and to be fair to everyone,
13 we ask that everyone listen quietly. Even applause can slow
14 things down.

15 We want to hear from everyone who has signed up to
16 speak. Please put your phones on silent so that every speaker
17 can be heard by the panel without distraction.

18 Again, thank you for taking time today to share
19 your comments on EPA's actions. Unless someone has questions,
20 let's get started. Okay.

21 Number 1.

22 MS. BARBARA DONACHY: Well, this is on. This is
23 good. Okay. My name is Barbara Donachy, B-A-R-B-A-R-A,
24 D-O-N-A-C-H-Y. And thank you for the opportunity to be here
25 and thank you to the EPA for your many years of work.

1 I am a public health professional and cochair of
2 the Physicians for Social Responsibility Colorado Working
3 Group. I speak for Colorado health professionals who are
4 deeply concerned about the health impacts of oil and gas
5 operations, particularly the impacts on our most vulnerable
6 populations.

7 We strongly urge retaining and strengthening the
8 New Source Performance Standards that will help curb emissions,
9 smog-forming VOCs and toxic air pollutants such as benzene.

10 The IPCC -- IPCC has determined that methane is 86
11 times more powerful than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas
12 over 20 years, a crucial time. Methane emissions from natural
13 gas account for the majority of total methane emissions.
14 Methane emissions from leaks across the oil and gas industry
15 are estimated to be worth 1.8 billion per year. So reduced
16 methane emissions is both financially wise and necessary to
17 slow accelerating climate change.

18 In recent years, an abundance of studies have
19 emerged that have pointed to the negative health impacts of
20 benzene and other toxic exposures for those living in close
21 proximity to fracking operations. Negative birth outcomes
22 include neural tube defects, congenital heart defects,
23 extremely low birth weight, premature birth, and in children
24 and young adults acute lymphocytic leukemia.

25 In Colorado, while the Colorado Department of

1 Public Health has done risk assessments of the health impact of
2 VOCs from oil and gas, the health risks from particulate matter
3 and ozone precursor emissions from oil and gas have largely
4 been ignored.

5 Yet approximately 17 percent of ground level ozone
6 in Denver and up to 40 percent of ozone along the Front Range
7 are attributable to the oil and gas emissions. High ozone
8 level worsens bronchitis, emphysema, and contribute to asthma,
9 reduced lung function and increased cardiovascular effects.
10 Children, the elderly, and those in poverty are most
11 vulnerable.

12 Based on 2011 data, a recent study, using EPA data,
13 I believe, estimated that the human health burden of ozone and
14 fine particulate matter attributable to oil and gas sector.
15 The human health burden includes the cost of premature deaths,
16 respiratory and cardiovascular hospital admissions, emergency
17 department visits for asthma, upper and lower respiratory
18 symptoms, days of work lost, days of school lost, cases of
19 aggravated and acute respiratory symptoms.

20 The study estimated that in 2025 the human health
21 burden would be about 1,000 cardiovascular and respiratory
22 hospital admissions, \$3,600 emergency department visits, tens
23 of thousands of upper and lower respiratory symptoms,
24 approximately \$100,000 of lost work days, and over a million
25 cases of exasperated asthma and acute respiratory symptoms.

1 Premature death alone would result in losses of 13 to 26
2 billion.

3 Regarding the impacts of climate change, Colorado
4 is already feeling the effects in form of extreme heat and wild
5 fires. In 2017 Denver Metro Area Extreme Heat report was
6 released and it projected that on our current global high
7 emissions path, by mid century in extreme years our area could
8 experience 25 to 44 days above 100 degrees and between 11 and
9 19 consecutive days over 100 degrees.

10 Such extreme temperatures increase the risk of heat
11 cramps, fainting, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and lead to
12 increased hospital visits and death due to cardiovascular and
13 respiratory diseases. At most risk are the elderly, young
14 children, poor and people who are medically compromised, a
15 significant portion of the population.

16 In closing, Physicians for Social Responsibility
17 fully supports retaining and strengthening the New Force
18 Performance Standards. We believe it is the right thing to do,
19 medically, socially, ethically and financially.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

22 Number 2.

23 MR. BOB ALLISON: My name is Bob Allison. I'm a
24 long time resident of the Colorado Front Range and a strong
25 supporter of National Parks Conservation Association, a group

1 -- a group with 1.3 million supporters across the country
2 dedicated to the protection of our national parks.

3 The proposal we are here to talk about today would
4 have a significant negative impact on the health and economic
5 vitality of our national parks around the country. I am here
6 to ask the EPA to reverse course on these proposed changes and
7 enforce the existing methane waste rules.

8 Particularly here in the southwest region, where
9 some of our most icon national parks are located, Mesa Verde,
10 Chaco Canyon and Rocky Mountain right up here. These are a
11 direct risk due -- direct risk due to the region's intensive
12 oil and gas production and methane waste.

13 According to the Department of Interior's National
14 Park Service, visitation to our parks generates over \$38
15 billion annually for our nation's economy. Right here in the
16 Four-Corners region that number is \$4.3 billion per year under
17 the states of Utah, New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado.

18 The park visitation -- the park visitation that
19 generates these benefits and the jobs that are dependent on it
20 are at risk of increased air pollution from oil and gas methane
21 waste in the region. National park visitation the highly
22 correlated to air pollution.

23 The National Park Service conducted a broad survey
24 over time and found that clean air was either extremely or very
25 important to 91 percent of its visitors. A study published

1 that summer in Science showed the ozone pollution levels in
2 national parks are now consistent -- statistically
3 indistinguishable from the 20 largest metropolitan areas in the
4 U.S.

5 The same study estimated that park visitation
6 decreased about 27 percent for every three days of
7 non-attainment of EPA air quality standards. Everyone in this
8 room knows what a potent greenhouse gas methane is. You may
9 not know that national parks are among the areas most
10 susceptible to damage from the effects of climate change due to
11 their extreme environments.

12 Temperatures in the national parks are rising at
13 twice the rate of the U.S. as a whole. Parks like Everglades
14 and Cape Hatteras are already experiencing the devastating
15 effects of sea level rise. Some of the worst wild fires in the
16 history of Glacier National Park in Yosemite have occurred in
17 just the last two years. Parks like Glacier National Park,
18 Joshua Tree and Saguaro are at risk of losing their namesake
19 features due to climate change.

20 I am not a scientist, nor an attorney. I'm a
21 finance guy with a master's from Wharton and 23 years'
22 experience in the investment banking industry. I know how to
23 do cost benefit analysis. I know that in this case the EPA has
24 focused on essential benefits of these proposed changes to the
25 oil and gas industry while ignoring the costs to our national

1 parks and to our country as a whole. Look, this is the easy
2 stuff. These existing methane waste rules make common sense
3 and need to be enforced.

4 Let's move on to tougher decisions that need to be
5 made. Let's get back to the mission of the EPA as stated on
6 your website, as mandated by Congress and the American people.
7 And I quote, "Our mission is to protect human health and the
8 environment," end quote.

9 For the future health and vitality of our national
10 parks and for our country as whole I ask you to reverse course
11 on the proposed changes and to focus on enforcing the existing
12 methane waste rules.

13 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

14 MS. ROSALIE WINN: Good morning. My name is
15 Rosalie Winn, R-O-S-A-L-I-E W-I-N-N. I am an attorney with the
16 Environmental Defense Fund here in Colorado. Thank you for the
17 opportunity to testify today.

18 EDF strongly opposes EPA's proposal to weaken the
19 2016 New Source Performance Standards for the oil and gas
20 sector. The current standards help to address the urgent
21 threat of climate change and protect the health of Americans
22 living near oil and gas development. They have applied proven,
23 cost-effective technologies and best management practices that
24 have been especially pioneered by leading states across the
25 country, including right here in Colorado.

1 EPA's proposal to dramatically weaken the standards
2 is misguided. It is inconsistent with the extensive factual
3 record and the agency's own analysis, and it would
4 significantly increase emissions of methane, volatile organic
5 compounds and hazardous air pollutants, exacerbating health and
6 climate harms.

7 Emissions from oil and natural gas facilities
8 contains a mixture of harmful pollutants, including methane, a
9 potent greenhouse gas. Methane is responsible for at least a
10 third of climate change we are currently experiencing. The
11 EPA's own data indicates that this oil and gas sector is
12 responsible for nearly 30 percent of the nation's total methane
13 emissions.

14 In addition to methane, emissions from oil and gas
15 facilities also include health-harming pollutants, such as
16 volatile organic compounds, which contribute to severe
17 pollution issues such as the recurring smog that we see here in
18 Colorado's Front Range. Oil and gas and facilities also make
19 hazard air pollutants, including cancer causing benzene. These
20 pollutants adversely affect the health of Americans around the
21 country, especially in communities living and working near oil
22 and gas development.

23 Moreover, recent evidence suggests that EPA
24 inventories dramatically underestimate harmful emissions from
25 the oil and gas sector. Research published just this past

1 summer in the Journal of Science demonstrates that the oil and
2 gas industry emits more than 13 million tons of methane each
3 year, 60 percent higher than EPA's estimates. Much of these
4 emissions result from leaks and other high emission events at
5 new oil and gas facilities. These sorts of events are exactly
6 the kind of emissions that the proposal will allow to go
7 undetected and unmitigated.

8 The current rule was developed to help address
9 these urgent climate and health harms by requiring operators to
10 deploy proven, reasonable and cost-effective safeguards. EPA
11 itself projects the current standards would reduce methane
12 pollution by 300,000 short tons, smog-forming pollutants by
13 150,000 short tons, and toxic pollutants by 1,900 tons per year
14 by 2020.

15 The current rule is working. Its measures have
16 been successfully implemented across the country and have
17 consistently proven to not only be feasible but also less
18 costly than EPA originally predicted as operators earn
19 additional profits by capturing and selling gas that would
20 otherwise be lost.

21 Indeed, the leak detection and repair requirements
22 that EPA is proposing to weaken have been in effect for over a
23 year and a half, delivering significant benefits to the public.
24 The compliance reports that EPA has publicly released show
25 companies are complying with standards. Despite repeated

1 requests for a full set of reports, EPA has resisted fully
2 releasing it to the public and appears to have ignored this
3 information on developing this proposal.

4 We again urge the Agency to immediately and fully
5 release all of this compliance information and extend the
6 comment period to show that the public has a meaningful
7 opportunity to comment on it.

8 Finally, EPA's proposal to dramatically weaken
9 these safeguards is untethered to its own analysis. Even as
10 the Agency proposes to weaken the rule, it concedes that the
11 current standards "still appear to be cost-effective for
12 reducing pollution." The agency's own analysis shows that
13 emissions from all sides are bigger and that the current
14 standards are even more cost-effective than when the EPA
15 originally promulgated that.

16 EPA's decision to reverse course and especially in
17 light of the agency's own findings is both inexplicable and
18 arbitrary. Furthermore, EPA has failed to fully weigh harms to
19 the public. Instead, EPA focused solely on an incorrect
20 analysis of costs to the oil and gas industry. The Clean Air
21 Act requires EPA to consider and adequately account for factors
22 beyond the costs, including that Clean Air Act overarching to
23 protect human health and the environment.

24 In summary, the current rule is cost-effective, has
25 already resulted in significant emission reductions, and

1 provides all Americans with important health and climate
2 benefits. By contract the proposal ignores the extensive
3 evidence supporting the current rule and would allow harmful
4 increases of dangerous pollutants at a time when new evidence
5 suggests that the current standards are not nearly protective
6 enough. For these reasons EDF urges EPA to withdrawal the
7 ill-advised proposal, and instead move to strengthen the
8 current standards and likewise move forward expeditiously with
9 protective standards for existing sources in the oil and
10 natural gas industry.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. FRUH: Is there a Speaker 4?

13 MS. LORI GLERIA: Hello my name is Lori. I am ten
14 years old and I'm from Albuquerque, New Mexico. I am a member
15 of The Global Warming Express in Albuquerque. We are concerned
16 about the environment and climate change, about fracking and
17 methane waste and pollution.

18 This is what we are here to talk to you about
19 today. We're concerned about the plastic waste fertilizer run
20 off, and every type of pollution. We want to live in a safe
21 and livable planet. I am here, and I am ten years old. And I
22 want to tell you that I have the power to make the right
23 decisions for the environment. I have a cloth bag when I shop,
24 I recycle. And I think and I try to make the right decisions
25 for the environment. I want you to do the same.

1 Why are oil and gas companies allowed to leak
2 methane into our air causing global warming and harming our
3 health, with other compounds that leak out with methane? I
4 have the power of influencing my friends and community and
5 that's what we are doing with The Global Warming Express. We
6 give talks as a group.

7 I met Mayor Keller, the Mayor of Albuquerque and I
8 told him that we are counting on him to take measures to
9 protect our water supply, our air quality, and protect us from
10 air pollution. We are not seeing the actions that we need from
11 our government.

12 Why would you weaken rules that just ask oil and
13 gas companies to be good neighbors to kids like me? If
14 grown-up won't take objection, we will. I am an individual and
15 I'm going to do what I can so we don't have a polluted
16 environment. We have free speech in this country. I'm
17 exercising it.

18 Last year I wrote a letter demanding action for the
19 environment to EPA Chief, Scott Pruitt, and also to President
20 Trump. And now again I am asking EPA Acting Administrator,
21 Andrew Wheeler to stop methane waste and pollution by not -- by
22 not weakening these rules.

23 The important thing for you to know is that my
24 generation will step into your shoes tomorrow, and I want to
25 scuba dive the coral reefs like my parents did, and I want that

1 for my children one day too. I'm going to vote when I'm 18,
2 and I'm going to make decisions that favor the environment. I
3 am not going to vote for people who run on a campaign that -- I
4 am going to vote for people who run on a campaign that protect
5 our environment.

6 The Earth is very fragile. We have so many
7 problems, including extinction of plants and animals and air.
8 The water pollution is unthinkable that people are still
9 refusing to stop the leaking of methane around the country
10 when right here in Colorado industry has agreed to stop. It's
11 hard to understand. There is a disconnect.

12 We demand action from political leaders and our
13 government. I will continue to speak up. I will not give up.
14 I will make decisions every day that will make a difference.
15 That's what I intend to do. I am aware that the planet is
16 changing. I know that there are a lot of challenges, and I
17 will do what I can as an individual. I am not going to be
18 ignorant and I'm not going to think it's hopeless. I'm going
19 to do everything I can and I need your help to make this Earth
20 a better place for us.

21 The fact that we have been aware of this for very,
22 very many years and done nothing is very disturbing to me. We
23 cannot go on like we are mindless people doing nothing about
24 what is happening. Is that how you want it?

25 We have to work for it. You can start by making

1 the right decisions now. Please don't weaken the EPA methane
2 rules. If anything, they should be strengthened to include
3 existing sources of oil and gas and not just new ones.

4 It's not like we can hop this planet and move to
5 Mars. This is our only planet. We have to protect it. I'm
6 going to do -- I'm going to do everything I can. I want the
7 Earth to succeed.

8 Now you are probably thinking, why should I help,
9 because life is about the past, the present, and the future.
10 Learn from the past, act in the present, imagine the future you
11 see.

12 I want to thank you for your time, thank you for
13 your attention, and thank you for being here today.

14 MS. SUSAN SELBIN: Good morning. I am Susan Selbin
15 S-U-S-A-N, S, as in Sam, E-L-B-I-N. I am representing the
16 Sierra Club and I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you
17 today.

18 I'm totally opposed to the proposed New Source
19 Performance Standards, generally and specifically the section
20 on eliminating methane rules which now protects Americans from
21 harmful pollution. It also provides funding for education.
22 And I am a retired teacher and our schools need that funding.

23 Most New Mexicans don't see the massive oil and gas
24 operations with platform after platform and a maze of rows that
25 are often in highways, and particularly I have seen it in

1 southeast New Mexico. I have gone through Artesia, New Mexico
2 and, you know, started choking and coughing because of the
3 smell of the operations. And then I have flown over, in a low
4 altitude, small plane, and I have seen those drilling
5 operations, pad after pad, rows all over. It's really awful.

6 And there is another proposal about doubling the
7 number of wells, pads, and our wells on pads, but to stick to
8 this one, I am here to say that we should not roll back these
9 rules. The proposal is bad for New Mexicans and Americans who
10 are already bearing increased costs of climate change.

11 I know not everyone believes in climate change,
12 but it's real and it's bad for industries that are trying to
13 compete in a cleaner energy economy. And I think just we
14 should be listening to our diverse voices, including many
15 Native American groups in New Mexico who want to keep the rules
16 strong and intact.

17 As it's already been mentioned, some of the facts,
18 methane is 86 times more potent to climate pollutants than
19 carbon dioxide. And oil and gas is the main culprit in
20 producing this. Industry can and has lived with the current
21 methane rule. It's been enforced for about a year and it
22 hasn't had negative effects. And let's leave what's working
23 there.

24 The EPA standards now in place will reduce
25 emissions from over 36,000 wells around the country, including

1 cutting 21,635 tons of methane, around 6,000 tons of smog
2 forming volatile compounds, and 450,000 of toxic air pollutants
3 each year. This is major.

4 So states support and are continuing to implement
5 successful standards. I understand that Colorado has vowed to
6 continue successful efforts to strengthen methane leak
7 detection and repair. So given the hurricanes, the wild fires
8 now raging in California, what is it 50 people maybe died from
9 fire so far?

10 It's evident what's happening. And renewable
11 energy isn't ready quite yet to fight all fossil fuels, but
12 it's coming, and it will be sooner than we think. Renewable
13 energy is a massive source of jobs in the U.S. Right now the
14 industry employs 2.7 million people. They could provide work
15 for 150,000 people currently employed in the coal industry,
16 which is going away. So we need to provide for those jobs.
17 And an estimated 9.8 million people worked in the clean energy
18 industry around the globe.

19 So the only thing is, why do we want to -- this
20 administration want to eliminate this? It has to do with
21 profits, not people, and that's the wrong emphasis. So, you
22 know, changes to our climate are already having profound
23 impacts on critical wildlife habitat. You know, habit ranges
24 are shifting, they are being lost, and there is increase in
25 pests and invasive species. All this is happening as the world

1 gets warmer.

2 There is decreasing available heat and water and
3 there is accelerating extinction. So climate change is, and
4 other factors are rapidly losing our biodiversity as well, as I
5 just mentioned before, some say that a mass extinction event is
6 underway. Well, estimates vary. One in six species on Earth
7 could become extinct if climate change were to continue at the
8 current rate.

9 So outdoor recreation is impacted by climate
10 change. Fishing opportunities decline, increased droughts,
11 wild fires, and other climate-fueled events repair and increase
12 our ability to enjoy our beautiful outdoors, and in New Mexico
13 it's beautiful. Big game are being severely impacted, rise in
14 temperatures, the drought, spread of disease.

15 There is a couple of examples, most population in
16 New Hampshire has declined 40 percent in the last decade due to
17 the rapid rise in infestations caused by climbing temperatures.

18 Am I running out of time?

19 MR. FRUH: Yes.

20 MS. SUSAN SELBIN: Okay. So what we got to do is
21 leave the rule in place.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. FRUH: Speaker Number 6.

24 MR. DERRICK TOLEDO: Hi. Good morning. My name is
25 Derrick Toledo, D-E-R-R-I-C-K T-O-L-E-D-O. Good morning to

1 you-all. I am the Clean Energy Fellow for the Rio Grande
2 Chapter of the Sierra Club, and I am speaking on behalf of our
3 Director, Camilla Feibelman and our chair, David Cross, former
4 mayor of Santa Fe, in addition to over 10,000 members through
5 New Mexico and West Texas.

6 Oil and gas development is growing rapidly in New
7 Mexico. In fact, in an article published November 13, 2018,
8 the Texas Tribune, Kathleen Sgamma, the president of the
9 lobbyist group Western Energy Alliance, called southeastern New
10 Mexico, "The hottest oil and gas area of the country." She
11 added that the Trump administration's regulatory roll back were
12 going to garner a lot of interest from the industry.

13 Oil production in New Mexico, which had already
14 been significant for decades has more than doubled since 2009.
15 With monthly output topping 500,000 barrels a day in the fourth
16 quarter of 2017 for the first time alone. The share of New
17 Mexico's production from shale gas wells has also greatly
18 increased in recent years, which shale gas output more than
19 quadrupling since 2010.

20 Actually due to oil and gas pollution, New Mexico's
21 air has long shown high concentrations of ozone, the primary
22 ingredient of smog. And the majority of New Mexicans currently
23 live in counties where ozone exceed thresholds that are
24 considered safe by EPA's Clean Air Scientific Advisory
25 Committee, and part of Dona Ana County has ozone levels that

1 exceed EPA's legally permissible limits.

2 Furthermore, hovering over New Mexico's San Juan
3 Basin is a 2,500 square mile methane cloud. This hotspot is
4 the largest elevated area of methane concentration ever
5 measured in the U.S., and is so big scientists can spot it from
6 space. Multiple studies have linked the formation of this
7 enormous hotspot to air emission from oil and gas development
8 in New Mexico.

9 Simply put, oil and gas development in New Mexico
10 is a major contributor to the pollution in our state, which
11 must be reduced to safeguard the health and well-being of New
12 Mexicans, especially populations such as children, elderly, low
13 income populations, and people with preexisting lung or heart
14 conditions.

15 New Mexico is also one of the poorest states in the
16 country and many of us residents are particularly susceptible
17 to negative health outcomes resulting from air pollution. This
18 will be impossible under the Trump Administration's current
19 proposal to weaken EPA methane rule.

20 Under this roll back, oil and gas developers will
21 be required to meet less stringent standards for finding and
22 fixing leaking equipment at new well sites and compressor
23 stations, which is the single largest source of air emissions
24 from new oil and gas infrastructure.

25 So EPA is moving in the exact opposite direction

1 where EPA is going to safeguard the health of New Mexicans.
2 Oil and gas fracking has exploded across the state in the last
3 decade. And energy companies have indicated that they will
4 pursue even greater levels of development in New Mexico if
5 regulations are rolled back.

6 So the EPA's legal duty is to protect the health of
7 our communities, not the profits of oil and gas companies. It
8 is currently failing New Mexicans in carrying out that duty in
9 the proposed roll back of the methane rule will deliver yet
10 another blow to our families and communities suffering from oil
11 and gas pollution. The Agency must abandon this ill-advised
12 and lawful proposal and instead commit to forcefully combatting
13 oil and gas pollution.

14 Now I want to finish up with a personal note to
15 this topic. I'm here today because my people need me to be
16 here, my native people. In addition to my colleagues here, I
17 am probably the only Native American in the room. So these
18 extractive companies in my home state seem to care less about
19 the repercussions of methane pollution because they live
20 nowhere near the sacrificed area.

21 They don't have a one-year-old daughter who has her
22 whole life to live next to this -- next to these polluted
23 areas. They don't have a grandma who passed just two months
24 ago after losing a battle -- ten-year battle to cancer. So I
25 don't consider myself a tree hugger. I don't consider myself a

1 hippy or a radical that's going to lay down in front of a
2 bulldozer in front of a forest being demolished, but I am those
3 things.

4 I am also just a guy trying to do what is right so
5 my daughter has a -- has a future, a healthy future ahead of
6 her. I know it's a ways away for her until we are fully
7 transitioned to clean and renewable energy, but I feel that
8 that should still be at the front of this discussion. If we
9 live like dinosaurs, we will be extent like them.

10 Thanks for your time today.

11 MR. FRUH: For the record, if anyone that has notes
12 or their transcript of their comments, if they would like to
13 leave them for the court reporter to make sure they get in the
14 record.

15 MR. JOHN OGLEVIE: Good morning. My name is John
16 Oglevie, O-G-L-E-V, as in Victor, I-E. I am a member of The
17 Idaho Organization of Resource Councils and a landowner.
18 Please do not roll back the environment standards that are
19 currently in place. Federal government must protect the rights
20 and quality of life and its citizen and place the needs of its
21 citizens before the convenience and profit of the oil and gas
22 companies.

23 I own a farm in Southwestern Idaho in Washington
24 County. Oil and gas drilling and extraction are currently
25 underway in this area where I live; however, I do not own the

1 mineral rights under my land. And even if I did, I would have
2 virtually no say in their development.

3 The State of Idaho owns my rights. They have
4 informed me, and all others in my area that they will allow
5 drilling on those tracts of land, that the state and its
6 preferred developer had determined to be economical. I cannot
7 stop them, and I have little control over their operations. As
8 only a surface rights owner, my quality of life and use of the
9 land I own is now subject solely to the economic gain of the
10 mineral rights owner. In this case that is the State of Idaho.

11 In the early 80s I worked in the gas fields of
12 Wyoming near the town of Evanston. In those days one could
13 smell the gas and other trace gases in the air, there was
14 always a whiff of something. It was pervasive. Nearer the
15 fields, everyone had to take precautions against and be
16 prepared to run to higher ground in the event of a hydrogen
17 sulfide emission. They even had a big siren that would go off.

18 The problem with the area was just not the wells
19 themselves, but collection of storage equipment that would also
20 leak. These problems with leaks and subsequent pollution I
21 experienced in the 80s must not be repeated today. It is
22 imperative that we keep strong monitoring programs in place to
23 require frequent, regular inspections and an auditing process
24 to ensure maintenance needed is completed in order to mitigate
25 these problems.

1 The Washington County Commissioners and the
2 commissioners in adjacent counties have written and approved
3 local ordinances to establish the security and the safety of
4 our community. With rules for the development, the extraction
5 and retirement of any and all wells drilled in our counties.
6 Ordinances have included; constant on-site inspection of
7 drilling processes, joint processes, minimum setback distances
8 to houses, businesses and schools, use of the -- indicates the
9 use of public lands, the impact on their water and habitat, and
10 bonding to ensure the collection of the storage equipment is
11 removed and wells capped once production ceases.

12 But the State of Idaho has refused to adopt and
13 have opposed the adoption of any of these ordinances or the
14 requirements they include. We have been told that the State of
15 Idaho, and the state alone will, quote, "Occupy the field of
16 the regulation of oil and gas exploration and production."

17 Perhaps large oil companies and gas companies will
18 voluntarily comply with current regulations, but the State of
19 Idaho has contracted with the small wildcat drilling company
20 to develop the state's oil and gas resources. Small wildcat
21 drilling companies operating on a shoe string budget may not
22 spend money needed on operation and maintenance associated with
23 leaks that is not required of them.

24 The State of Idaho has not yet incorporated
25 inspection and maintenance activities citing cost projections

1 provided by their preferred developer that these requirements
2 would make the development too extensive to pursue. So now
3 it's up to you, the federal government. The Environmental
4 Protection Agency has the power to set standards that will
5 ensure my quality of life and my land is not adversely impacted
6 by inadequate oversight by the State of Idaho solely in its
7 quest to gain income from the development of these fields.
8 Please use that power to maintain strong regulations of the
9 hazardous work. If this is truly a valuable resource, then the
10 companies and the state can afford the regulation costs to keep
11 our citizens safe and the quality of our life unaffected.

12 The goal should never be to squeeze every last
13 penny of profit out of the venture if in so doing people most
14 affected by that venture lose the quality of their life, the
15 very reason we live in Idaho in the first place. The first
16 people to be affected will be those of us living next to these
17 wells and the collection of storage equipment.

18 Without the current EPA rules and regulations
19 enforced we will smell it in a matter of months. I cannot stop
20 the State of Idaho from releasing drilling rights under my
21 land. I implore you to not weaken or roll back the
22 environmental standards that are currently in place now. The
23 current rules and regulations require the company to develop
24 the oil and gas beneath my farm to monitor its operations for
25 leaks of gas and pollutants that could harm my health, and

1 repair them in a timely manner.

2 I implore you to make the State of Idaho
3 accountable to me and all others in Idaho and recognize that
4 our quality of life matters.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. JOHN HICKS: Hi. My name is John Hicks,
7 J-O-H-N H-I-C-K-S. I am from Golden, Colorado, just west of
8 here. And I am very appreciative of having this opportunity to
9 comment.

10 I am here today to speak out in opposition to EPA
11 and its proposed roll back of the New Source Performance
12 Standards. The proposed so-called improvements to these
13 standards for the oil and gas industry consist of relaxing
14 methane leak detection and repair requirements resulting in
15 projected cost savings to the oil and gas industry of more than
16 \$70,000,000 per year. EPA's own Fact Sheet describing the
17 proposed changes indicates that a primary driver for the
18 changes is to, quote, "Significantly reduce regulatory burden,
19 saving the industry tens of millions of dollars in compliance
20 costs each year."

21 Now sort of in contradiction to that, I think the
22 EPA's website, as was mentioned by a previous speaker, says
23 that, "The mission of the EPA is to protect the human health --
24 protect human health and the environment." And as part of this
25 mission, again I quote from the website, "EPA works to ensure

1 that Americans have clean air, land and water."

2 And it seems to me that the proposed weakening of
3 these leak detection and repair requirements is in direct
4 contradiction to EPA's own stated mission. The EPA's mission
5 is not to make the oil and gas industry more profitable and to
6 put corporate profits ahead of public health. It is to protect
7 public health and the environment.

8 So along the Front Range of Colorado where I live,
9 oil and gas industry is an increasingly pressing concern as new
10 production facilities are installed within sight, smell and
11 hearing of other occupied structures. As of last year there
12 were 55,000 active wells and 36,500 inactive wells in the State
13 of Colorado.

14 New homes are going up in the same areas as new
15 wells. Creating an escalating clash between human communities
16 and heavy industry. And it's apparent that human health and
17 the environment in Colorado and elsewhere would be negatively
18 impacted by the proposed weakening of the leak detection and
19 repair requirements due to, one, increased emission of toxic
20 pollutants into the air and, two, increased emission of
21 methane, which as a number of people have said is a powerful
22 greenhouse gas that will further exacerbate climate change at a
23 time when we need to be dramatically reducing methane gas
24 emissions.

25 Methane is not the only destructive substance we

1 should be concerned about as we witness the growing proximity
2 between human communities and oil and gas production along the
3 Front Range of Colorado.

4 People living near oil and gas facilities may be
5 exposed to hazardous air pollutants, including carcinogens,
6 such as benzene that could pose health risks above levels
7 deemed acceptable by the U.S. EPA. And that's according to a
8 new study put out by researchers at the Colorado School of
9 Public Health, the Boulder County Public Health Department,
10 University of Colorado, Boulder, NASA, and the University of
11 California Irvine.

12 And then there is the very real concern of climate
13 change that has just amazing, startling impacts these days, not
14 only for future generations and in distant places, but right
15 here now in Colorado. Methane, a greenhouse gas, is a powerful
16 contributor to climate change.

17 Data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate
18 Change suggests that more than half of the warming we
19 experience over the next two decades due to current emissions
20 will be from continued release of methane and other short-lived
21 pollutants into the atmosphere. Impacts are being felt in
22 Colorado right now, including, but not limited to, decreased
23 snow pack, which affects our water supply, it affects the
24 tourism industry. As you know the ski industry is a huge
25 economic driver in the state. Seventy percent of our water

1 supply comes from the snow pack.

2 Another impact of climate change is drought, which
3 affects the frequency and severity of wild fires, which is a
4 huge deal in this state. Climate change also increases pine
5 beetle infestation of our forests.

6 So how are we as Coloradans and Americans going to
7 respond to this challenge? We can choose to take
8 responsible --

9 MR. FRUH: Excuse me. Mr. Hicks, you need to wrap
10 it up.

11 MR. JOHN HICKS: Okay. All right. I will just say
12 we can choose to take responsible actions and mitigate the
13 impacts or we can add to the problem. Let's choose not to add
14 to the problem, let's be part of the solution.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. FRUH: Okay. Number 9.

17 MR. RYAN STREAMS: Good morning. My name is Ryan
18 Streams, I am a business development manager for Kairos
19 Aerospace. I'm just going to go in a little bit different
20 direction than what we heard from speakers before. But first I
21 want to thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the
22 proposed revisions.

23 Kairos Aerospace performs aircraft-based methane
24 leak detection for the upstream and midstream oil and gas
25 industry. So we have proprietary methane spectrometers and

1 data processing technologies and we are able to survey tens of
2 thousands of wells across hundreds or even thousands of square
3 miles in the fraction of the time it would take to do a
4 ground-based survey.

5 We are pleased that the alternative means for
6 emissions limitation section is under consideration for
7 revision, the proposed rule. I think in the 2016 rule the --
8 it was basically structured in a way that would make it
9 extremely difficult for a company like us to deploy new
10 technology capable of detecting methane faster and more cost
11 effectively. Unfortunately, the proposed revisions under
12 consideration don't go nearly far enough. If it's approved in
13 its current form, the AMEL is going to remain unusable for many
14 new detection technologies and will limit the industry's
15 ability to innovate and pursue cost-effective new methane
16 reduction strategies.

17 In particular, EPA's requirement for site specific
18 applications is basically going to kill new technologies before
19 they can get off the ground. Under Section 111(h) of the Clean
20 Air Act EPA is required to go through the federal register of
21 those who comment. For each application, that requirement, on
22 top of the requirement that every application be site specific,
23 so you have to do an individual application for every single
24 well, is going to create an unmanageable regulatory burden for
25 technology vendors, the oil and gas industry, and for EPA's

1 itself.

2 There are over 25,000 wells that were drilled after
3 September 15, 2015, which is the effective date of the OOOOa
4 rule. So if you assume that every application is received by
5 EPA is immediately published in the Federal Register for 30
6 days and then immediately approved, which is a pretty
7 aggressive timeline, it would take EPA over 2,000 years to
8 approve a single technology for all OOOOa sites. If there are
9 other technologies, that back audit is going to grow even
10 further.

11 The good news is that EPA has already established
12 that technologies can be approved for industry wide use under
13 the right parameters. In fact, optical gas imaging, which is
14 basically the technology that everybody else is being held
15 against was approved using Monte Carlo computer model
16 simulations about leak reduction effectiveness and it received
17 industry-wide approval within EPA defined operating parameters.
18 So there is a framework in place to make this change.

19 In addition to the application process itself being
20 fundamentally broken EPA risks needlessly bogging down oil and
21 gas facility operators in the AMEL application process. We
22 urge EPA to allow technology developers, who really are the
23 subject matter experts in terms of the capability and
24 limitations of their technologies to apply for OOOOa approval
25 on their own.

1 We believe that oil and gas operators should be
2 free to partner in applications if they chose to, but that
3 their participation should be entirely voluntary. Many oil and
4 gas companies are small businesses that don't have the
5 resources to dedicate to AMEL applications for every site that
6 they own. Requiring their participation effectively closes any
7 small company off from using new technology.

8 Trade associations said a proposed rule can't be
9 used to fill that gap since many of them really don't have the
10 resources to be doing this, and not every company is a member
11 of a trade association.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.
13 We are developing written comments that will go into more
14 detail on how the AMEL can be strengthened, and we believe that
15 will allow EPA to encourage innovation, allow for new methane
16 technology to be used, and ultimately reduce methane emissions
17 further.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. FRUH: Thank you. Number 10.

20 MS. ERIKA BROWN: Yes. Hi. My name is Erika
21 Brown, E-R-I-K-A B-R-O-W-N. I am from Durango, Colorado in the
22 southwest corner of the state. I am here representing San Juan
23 Citizens Alliance, and I appreciate the opportunity to offer
24 comment today.

25 I am going to speak out in opposition to the

1 Environmental Protection Agency's proposed roll back of the New
2 Source Performance Standards. San Juan Citizens Alliance
3 represents over 1,000 dues paying members and thousands more
4 supporters who live in southwestern Colorado and northwestern
5 New Mexico under the greatest concentration of methane in our
6 country.

7 We support common sense methane pollution standards
8 to protect our air, our climate, and our tax dollars, and it's
9 the EPA's responsibility to do that. This proposal
10 unnecessarily undermines the health of our communities, the
11 path towards a stable climate, and the widespread public
12 support for these methane solution standards. EPA's own
13 analysis found that these standards would achieve significant
14 reductions of methane and other harmful air pollution at low
15 cost. Weakening them will hurt communities like mine where
16 there is extensive oil and gas development and ignores the
17 EPA's responsibility to protect the safety of American
18 families.

19 As you know, volatile organic compounds and other
20 toxic pollutant are concurrently released with methane, and
21 rolling back those protections impacts the air I breathe, the
22 air my children breathe, and the air my neighbors breathe, so
23 we are the ones paying the price for people all over the
24 country.

25 Although we live in a rural area and should enjoy

1 pristine air, the American Lung Association last year gave La
2 Plata County an F for ozone. That's worse than here in Denver.

3 The development of the EPA's original methane rule
4 took into account extensive stakeholder and public input and
5 the roll back of that rule on the other hand was done in
6 opposition of the vast public support for that rule. Sadly,
7 this seems to fit the pattern of creating loopholes for
8 corporate polluters, putting their interest of them before the
9 American people.

10 The EPA's standards in place right now will cut
11 21,635 tons of methane, 6,000 tons a smog forming volatile
12 organic compounds, and 450,000 pounds of toxic air pollutants
13 each year. And as one of the previous commenters mentioned, it
14 seems like that is all in an effort to create benefits for the
15 oil and gas companies.

16 Again, as other people have mentioned, methane is a
17 very potent climate driver. And right now the oil and gas
18 industry releases over 8 million metric tons of methane
19 pollution per year. It's the equivalent of operating 150
20 coal-fire powered plants for a year. Rolling back EPA's
21 methane rules would mean more potent climate pollution and deny
22 communities like mine the promise of cleaner air.

23 We are already experiencing a warming climate,
24 again as many other commenters have mentioned, that means we
25 need to act now. The impacts are getting worse and this effort

1 to roll back these protections would take us in the opposite
2 direction.

3 The reality is these standards are common sense,
4 cost-effective, and feasible pollution controls that do not
5 harm industry. Colorado has vowed to continue their very
6 successful efforts to strengthen their methane leak detection
7 and repair, and the oil and gas industry here is thriving.

8 If these safeguards are removed, the health of
9 families across Colorado and New Mexico will suffer, and that's
10 why I am here today, and why hundreds of thousands of people
11 across the country have spoken out in opposition to this roll
12 back.

13 This proposal is bad for your air, the promise of a
14 stable climate, and an industry trying to compete as we move
15 forward. We ask the administration to listen to these diverse
16 voices that are overwhelmingly demanding that EPA keep its
17 methane rules strong and intact.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. FRUH: We will now call Speaker Number 13.

20 MS. ANNIE EKBLAD: Hi. My name is Annie Ekblad,
21 and the last name is E-K-B-L-A-D. So my name is Annie Ekblad,
22 and I am here as a mom and a member of Moms Clean Air Force to
23 speak out today to demand that the EPA does not weaken the oil
24 and gas standards currently in place and to call on the oil and
25 gas industry to immediately implement technology to ease the

1 methane leaking into our air as a result of fracking.

2 I am here as a concerned citizen of Colorado and
3 the United States and most importantly as a mother of a young
4 child. Methane leaks from the oil and gas industry contribute
5 to climate change and pose an immediate health threat to our
6 children as they suffer the effects of ozone pollution.

7 Colorado is a place of stunning natural beauty, and
8 it's also home to tremendous resources of natural gas.
9 Northern Colorado, where I live, is also home to many active
10 oil and gas wells. Weld County, where I lived until two years
11 ago, has more than any other county in the United States with
12 more than 23,000 within the county borders. As the most
13 fracked county in American, you can see hundreds of oil and gas
14 operations next to the freeway as you drive south to Denver,
15 and there are more wells being proposed every day.

16 It seemed very possible that we could have an oil
17 and gas operation in our backyard at any time, which was the
18 huge factor in our move to Larimer County. I felt that in
19 order to keep my family safe from the worst effects of methane
20 and the accompanying toxic pollution, we needed to move. And
21 unlike many, my family is lucky enough to have the resources to
22 do so.

23 However, air pollution is not limited by county
24 borders. And the harmful effects of oil and gas air pollution
25 has resulted in Larimer County's air pollution threat elevation

1 to the highest 10 percent for cancer risks. The noise and
2 water pollution caused by drill site are of great concern, but
3 air pollution from the natural gas leaked at these sites is
4 even graver.

5 The oil and gas sector is the leading industrial
6 source of methane pollution and the massive expansion into
7 fracking has resulted in a state where 3 million Coloradoans
8 now live in areas where ozone levels exceed national clean air
9 standards. This ozone pollution poses an immediate threat to
10 our children as their developing lungs are more vulnerable to
11 the harmful effects of ozone pollution.

12 Anyone that has a small child knows how much they
13 love to play outside and this love of the outdoors increases
14 their exposure to air pollution even more. I want to be able
15 to take my son out to play and experience the majestic beauty
16 of Colorado without worrying if the air he breathes is going to
17 harm him. I want him to have a safe and stable future in a
18 safe and stable climate.

19 As parents, we have a moral obligation to fight for
20 our children's health, safety and well-being. Clean air to
21 breathe and a livable climate are things that we take for
22 granted every day and they are quickly slipping away.

23 We need strong, protected methane regulations.
24 Technology exists that can combat methane leaks and is
25 essential that the oil and gas industry be mandated to

1 implement it. Our children deserve to live in a world with
2 clean care, free from the destructive effects of air pollution
3 and climate change, and it is the responsibility of state and
4 federal leaders like the EPA, adults in the community, and
5 parents to do everything we can to ensure that outcome.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. FRUH: We will now go to Speaker 14.

8 MS. CHRISTINE BERG: Good morning. Thank for
9 having us here today. My name is Christine Berg, I am a
10 Colorado consultant. I am also the Mayor of Lafayette,
11 Colorado, where at my back door is Weld County, which we just
12 heard is the most fracked county in America.

13 For a little background, this is the third time I
14 have provided my testimony in support of the EPA's New Source
15 Performance Standards in three years. In that time, millions
16 of methane have been leaked into the air, I have had another
17 child, and become an even fiercer advocate for holding
18 polluters accountable regardless of where they operate.

19 This common sense rule fulfills the obligation of
20 the EPA -- that the EPA has to the American people to protect
21 our air and conserve our natural resources. Like me, one in
22 three Americans live in a county with oil and gas development.
23 As extraction comes closer and closer to our communities,
24 modifying this rule will adversely affect the health and
25 well-being of millions of Americans who live near oil and gas

1 like me.

2 In some ways this hearing feels like déjà vu, we've
3 already been here, the public has already commented and the
4 common sense rule is already in place. Attempts to weaken and
5 roll back this rule to squander our natural resources. It is a
6 rejection of creating better health outcomes for our children,
7 perhaps more egregiously and continues to be a waste of
8 precious time and a race against the clock to combat climate
9 change.

10 This rule already has wide and diverse support
11 nationally. April 2016, I joined over 70 mayors and
12 commissioners from 15 states in support of the creation of this
13 rule. Mayors from Fargo, Santa Fe, Washington DC, Philadelphia
14 and Denver all agree that tight emissions will protect our
15 constituents from unhealthy air pollution associated with
16 methane and toxic chemicals emitted from oil and gas
17 infrastructure. We deserve protection from the consequences of
18 climate change that we are seeing in our cities and counties
19 each day.

20 Right now, methane is leaking from over one million
21 oil and gas wells and associated equipment located across the
22 country. These leaks add up to a much larger problem than
23 aggregate, over 7 million metric tons. So what does that mean?
24 Enough gas to heat five million American homes.

25 There is a certain irony that we are back here in

1 Colorado, the epicenter for successful implementation of
2 state-wide methane regulations for both new and existing
3 sources. The rule we're defending today was muddled after
4 ours, which was jointly written by oil and gas companies in
5 Canada, Devon Energy, Anadarko, and the Environmental Defense
6 Fund. You may ask how is it working out? Well, fortunately we
7 have some great data for you since its implementation.

8 According to the Denver Post article "energy
9 companies having found and repaired about 73,000 methane leaks
10 since 2015 under the state required oil field inspection
11 program," and "according to the Colorado Air Pollution Control
12 Division, the number of leaks fell by 52 percent" between 2015
13 and 2017, it's working.

14 Further, according to NARCO, in September of the
15 National Gas Intelligence, the Colorado Oil and Gas Association
16 CEO Dan Haley was quoted saying, "The State has continued to
17 break new ground in balancing regulations with oil and gas
18 development. Our companies follow dozens of environmental
19 rules unique to Colorado and it very likely means the cleanest
20 oil and gas production in the world is taking place right
21 here." My question is: Why wouldn't we want this for the rest
22 of the country?" He goes on to state, "Make no mistake, these
23 regulations are expensive and rigorous, but our air is getting
24 cleaner and our companies are innovating at a rapid pace making
25 all of this possible." Sounds like he is a supporter of the

1 New Source Performance Standards, including the regular
2 inspection of oil field equipment and use of technology.

3 You know what is a good deal, cutting emissions
4 gives us better health outcomes for our children. The
5 increased warming costs by methane and its domino effect as
6 warming increases grow in methane levels that can lead to
7 asthma. Right now there are more than 750,000 summertime
8 asthma attacks in kids nation wide leaked to ozone smog from
9 oil and gas pollution. We are third in the country for these
10 asthma attacks.

11 America needs to continue to follow Colorado's lead
12 and reduce methane pollution from the oil and gas industry. If
13 federal action isn't taken, methane pollution from the oil and
14 natural gas industries expected to increase around 25 percent
15 nationally over the next ten years with the urgent increase of
16 oil and gas extraction.

17 We know in Colorado this regulation to clean up our
18 -- clean up our air and oil and gas facilities results in
19 better health outcomes, saves industry money in the long run,
20 and continues to spur American innovation. It turns out by
21 reducing emissions, a short-lived climate forces like methane
22 we can also take significant steps towards meeting our goals
23 with greenhouse gas emissions.

24 Here in Colorado, we are pioneers of common sense
25 solutions, collaboration and innovation. The implementation of

1 our statewide EPA methane rules embodies this reality. As a
2 mom, a mayor, and Coloradan, I ask the EPA to take this message
3 back to Washington DC, it's time to start playing politics with
4 our children's health and support the methane rules for both
5 new sources and to move forward with the implementation of the
6 EPA methane rules for sustained sources immediately.

7 And I have a copy of that letter signed by 70
8 mayors and commissioners, and I'll give it to you as well as
9 part of the record.

10 Thank you so much.

11 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

12 Speaker 15.

13 MS. ALYSSA TSUCHIYA: Hi. My name is Alyssa
14 Tsuchiya. I am a legislative associate with the Clean Vehicles
15 program at the Union of Concerned Scientists. We are the
16 nation's leading science-based nonprofit putting rigorous,
17 independent science to work to solve our planet's most pressing
18 problems.

19 On behalf of more than half a million supporters
20 and network of more than 20,000 scientists, engineers, and
21 public health professionals, UCS strongly opposes the
22 reconsideration of emission standards for new, reconstructed,
23 and modified sources in the oil and natural gas sector proposed
24 by EPA, and urge the EPA to enforce full implementation of the
25 standards as finalized in 2016.

1 EPA's proposed reconsideration will have
2 detrimental impacts on public health, the climate, and industry
3 accountability. First, public health. We stand with the
4 communities on the front lines of oil and natural gas
5 extraction and infrastructure that are exposed to the dangerous
6 emissions of hazard air pollutants (HAPs), and volatile organic
7 compounds (VOCs), which cause smog. Exposure to elevated
8 levels of air pollutants can lead to adverse health outcomes,
9 included respiratory problems, cardiovascular disease, and
10 cancer. The current performance standards are projected to
11 decrease emissions by hundreds of thousands of tons each year.

12 Instead of protecting public health, as is EPA's
13 missions, the Agency is rolling back the fugitive emissions and
14 pneumatic pump requirements, which are responsibility for
15 nearly all 96.8 percent of reductions the HAPs and a third,
16 33.1 percent, of reductions of VOCs expected from the 2016
17 final rule. The Agency even admits that this proposed rule,
18 "may degrade air quality and adversely affect health and
19 welfare effects associated with exposure to ozone, PM 2.5, and
20 HAP..." this is an unacceptable application of responsibility
21 on the part of the Agency.

22 Second, climate change. Methane is a greenhouse
23 gas many times more potent that carbon dioxide. If we have any
24 hope of limiting the worst effect of climate change, we can't
25 allow methane to enter the atmosphere unchecked. However,

1 that's exactly what EPA's proposed reconsideration would do by
2 reducing requirements for oil and natural gas operators to
3 monitor and fix methane leaks.

4 Limiting fugitive emissions is especially urgent as
5 we're increasingly using high methane production methods like
6 hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas and tight oil. UCS
7 has long supported a role for natural gas as part of a
8 transition away from an electric grid dominated by coal to one
9 that relies on cleaner, renewable energy sources. However,
10 allowing unmitigated methane leakage could tip the balance so
11 natural gas could be more carbon intensive than coal.

12 Likewise, we are working to decrease the carbon intensity of
13 transportation through fuel efficiency and electrification;
14 however, if oil production is getting more carbon intensive,
15 the other policies we are pursuing will be offset.

16 Decarbonization of the power and transportation sectors
17 requires scrutiny of upstream emission.

18 The best available science is telling us to act now
19 to reduce methane waste. A study published in Science found
20 that the domestic oil and natural gas industry is emitting
21 nearly 60 percent more methane than we thought. And the recent
22 sobering report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate
23 Change paints grave consequences for missing the 1.5 degree C
24 global warming limit.

25 In the face of these facts, the Trump

1 Administration is setting us on a path to failure, pretending
2 that the only thing that matters is regulatory relief. What
3 about our vulnerable communities and future generations?

4 Lastly, industry accountability. When the 2016
5 rule was finalized, we heralded it as a vital first step to
6 protect climate, but noted that strong follow through would be
7 vital to make sure that oil and gas producers account for all
8 of their methane emissions. Instead of moving forward on
9 capping emissions from existing sources in the oil and gas
10 sector, the Trump Administration is bending over backwards to
11 fulfill the industry's wish list, including the earlier
12 proposed implementation stays and the proposed reconsideration
13 of key requirements.

14 While some oil and gas companies have announced
15 voluntary methane emissions reduction targets, many continue to
16 downplay or misrepresent climate science and the dangers of
17 carbon emissions, and if all continue to support trade groups
18 that spread climate disinformation and work to stymie needed
19 climate policies. It's clear that these companies need to be
20 held accountable for the emissions caused by their expanding
21 activity, and voluntary targets for weak federal regulations
22 will be enough to rein in a major threat to our climate.

23 In conclusion of UCS and all our members and
24 supporters, I urge you to reject this proposed rule so we can
25 protect human health, clean our air, and create a more

1 sustainable future for us all.

2 MR. FRUH: Speaker Number 16.

3 MS. ABBEY PALTE: Hi. My name is Abbey Palte. I
4 live in Thornton, Colorado. Last name is P-A-L-T-E. And I am
5 speaking as a member of Moms Clean Air Force. As a Colorado
6 native, I am not sure if you guys are from Colorado, but I
7 would like to welcome you to our beautiful state and thank you
8 for allowing this public comment and for listening to us.

9 I am here today to express my concerns around the
10 proposed roll back of the New Source Performance Standards. I
11 am very concerned about methane pollution, and I am worried
12 that without protections in place, our environment, our health
13 and our children's future will be put at great risk.

14 I am a mom of three wonderful little girls, and I
15 am an elementary school teacher. So I look into the faces of
16 the future every single day. I am here today on behalf of
17 these children to beg you to keep the New Source Performance
18 Standards in place as they were originally written.

19 We need pollution limits to protect our families
20 and our atmosphere from harmful methane pollution. As members
21 of the EPA, your mission is to protect human health and the
22 environment. Your website talks extensively about how you will
23 accomplish this mission. And the first step listed is
24 developing and enforcing regulations.

25 The New Source Performance Standards are in place

1 to protect human health and the environment. It is your job,
2 according to your mission statement, to enforce, not roll back
3 regulations. I have always been an environmentalist. And as a
4 kid, when I first heard about what the EPA was, I truly
5 envisioned a group of superheroes protecting the planet. I
6 urge you to be that EPA for our children.

7 Climate change is one of our planet's biggest
8 threats. And as we have heard many times today, methane has
9 been proven to be a huge contributor to climate change. As
10 you've heard again, methane was a highly potent greenhouse gas
11 with over 80 times the warming impact of carbon dioxide over
12 the first 20 years after it is released. And while the EPA
13 estimates as 1.4 methane, percent methane rate leak, leak rate
14 from U.S. oil and gas operations, which amounts to 8.1 million
15 metric tons a year. A new Environmental Defense Fund study
16 estimates the leak rate to be 2 percent, which puts the total
17 at 13 million metric tons per year.

18 In Adams County, where I live, there are currently
19 over 900 active wells, and there are 656 pending permits right
20 now for new wells. The number of existing wells is astounding
21 and new applications for drilling permits are coming at us at a
22 ferocious rate, and it feels like a tidal wave.

23 Unfortunately, I am learning this rush to drill is
24 not unique to Colorado as we see an increase of oil and gas
25 permits across the country. At a time when new drilling is

1 increasing at an alarming rate, we need protections offered by
2 the New Source Performance Standards more than ever. If we
3 continue to drill new wells at the rate we are going, the
4 amount of methane being released into our atmosphere just here
5 in Colorado with the current protections in place is
6 staggering. Roll the protections back and we are looking at
7 massive irreversible damage to our environment and our health.

8 Please our hope lies in your decision. Our hope
9 for a future on a planet that is able to sustain life for
10 generations to come.

11 The International Energy Agency estimates that the
12 oil and gas industry can reduce their roll back emissions by
13 75 percent, and that up to two-thirds of those reductions can
14 be realized at zero net cost. I would think that reducing
15 emissions would be desirable for an industry that's leaking an
16 expensive product.

17 The changes to the New Source Performance Standards
18 are being proposed to reduce regulatory burden and save the
19 industry tens of millions of dollars in compliance costs each
20 year. But the thing is, if the U.S. oil and gas industry clean
21 up its act and fix its leaks, they would save themselves two
22 million dollars a year.

23 If an industry hasn't cleaned itself up to save
24 money, what makes you think it will clean itself up without
25 safeguards? I understand that another reason for the proposed

1 changes is to reduce duplicative EPA and state requirements.

2 It seems redundant to have safeguards at the state and federal
3 level, I get that, but not all states have adopted protections
4 against methane pollution. In fact, only Colorado, California,
5 and Pennsylvania do have such regulations in place.

6 We all share the same air. So even though we do
7 have our own regulations, we still need to have federal
8 regulations to protect the rest of the country.

9 Thank you for listening. Some may call my naive,
10 but I still believe the EPA can be superheroes protecting our
11 planet.

12 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

13 Is there a Speaker 17?

14 MS. WENDY MCKENDRICK: Hi. My name is Wendy
15 McKendrick, M-C-K-E-N-D-R-I-C-K. I am a mother of two young
16 girls. I care about clean air because my children and all
17 children deserve to grow up with clean air to breathe. We as a
18 country should always be moving forward. When we roll back
19 regulations on clean air we take giant steps backward. For the
20 love of our planet and children, why would we ever go backward?
21 Things should be improving and getting better. We have new
22 technology and renewable sources of energy, air quality should
23 be improving. Our planet should be thriving, and yet it's not.

24 As the EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, you
25 should be doing everything within your power to protect our

1 environment. It's your job and your mission statement. Many
2 of the lobbyists, including industries must be taken out of the
3 equation. The only thing that matters is the health of the
4 environment and the people living on the planet. We must have
5 one before we can have the other. When our Earth is healthy,
6 people will be healthy.

7 I expect the mission statement of EPA to be lived
8 up to. We need strict regulations on methane. Our children
9 and grandchildren's very lives depend on you keeping strict
10 regulations in place so the polluters of our nation are held
11 accountable.

12 On your website you state, "Protecting the
13 environment is everyone's responsibility." Well, I can tell
14 you I am doing my part. Are you doing yours? If you roll back
15 regulations on methane, every single person on this planet will
16 suffer because of you not doing your part. Simply because of
17 the position that you are in, you can make more of a global
18 impact than thousands of us recycling, using solar panels,
19 driving electric vehicles.

20 We all contribute, but you can make the biggest
21 contribution of all by keeping strong regulations in place to
22 protect our air, our water, and our planet. My children are
23 depending on you. I am depending on you. Our planet is
24 depending on you. Please don't let us down.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. FRUH: Our next speaker, Number 18.

2 MR. EDWARD NED HARVEY: Thank you for the
3 opportunity to testify today. My name is Ned Harvey, Edward
4 Ned Harvey, and I am with Rocky Mountain Institute. And I lead
5 our global practice working with international transport
6 industries and global industries. I am not going to make the
7 same argument everybody else is making today because it's --
8 and we certainly well understand the health and climate and
9 environmental impacts of the oil and gas industry.

10 What I am here to argue is that roll back of
11 methane policy and regulations is short-sighted and will serve
12 the weak competitiveness of U.S. gas domestically and in
13 international markets. The strong national focus on ensuring
14 the U.S. oil and gas industry is the leading global player in
15 producing, transporting and distributing low emissions, meaning
16 low methane emissions gas is essential for the short and long
17 term health of the industry and for the state and national
18 economies that are depending on it.

19 Giving emerging dynamics in global gas supply and
20 demand, we must anticipate that a market price premium will
21 emerge for low emissions gas. And as such, it is in our
22 national interest and our state's interest to ensure that U.S.
23 gas sets the standard globally for low emissions gas.

24 Thanks to fast action by the EPA and states like
25 Colorado and the last restrictions in the region, we

1 established the global standard for methane emissions and
2 policy and regulations. However today, leadership on this area
3 is coming from oil and -- the international gas companies out
4 of Europe, Australia, Russia, and even the Middle East. The
5 U.S. based IOCs are woefully behind, and there has been very
6 little, if any, public endorsement from mid -- tier companies,
7 especially those based in Colorado.

8 A study from the Journal of Science published July
9 2018 found that methane emissions from U.S. oil and gas are
10 2.3 percent of annual production. This is an unknown number
11 and they are all over the place. But between what the IEA says
12 and what the Science study says, and others, it is far worse,
13 60 percent higher than the EPA's estimate, and far, far worse
14 than what the industry estimates.

15 If we are emitting at this level, the greenhouse
16 emissions from the oil and gas industry is the same as
17 5.4 million passenger vehicles driven in a year. The annual
18 CO2 emissions of energy use in almost 3 million U.S. homes.
19 The annual CO2 emissions from over six coal-fired power plants
20 emit enough natural gas to heat ten million homes. This is
21 wasteful.

22 The 2.3 percent estimated by the study in Science
23 is also over seven times as high as the 2018 baseline set by
24 the international industries of a 0.37 percent emissions
25 intensity rate for this year. It's 9.3 times the 2025 target

1 of 0.25 percent emissions, and it's 11 and a half times the
2 standard recommended by the EPA -- by Environmental Defense
3 Fund just last April.

4 To be absolutely clear, the future of gas and the
5 national and global energy transition is not certain. Even
6 today it is under threat from multiple angles.

7 For utility scale electricity generation, which was
8 once the future market for gas and the primary growth
9 opportunity, natural gas generation is already facing stiff
10 competition from renewables. Even with current over-supply and
11 historically low prices, firm, reliable power from integrated
12 portfolios of wind, solar and storage are out-competing both
13 new and existing gas plants. Utility in Indiana, Michigan,
14 Colorado, and California have all put forth economic-based
15 proposals to use renewable and storage to retire existing gas
16 plants and to retire and to prevent the build out of new gas
17 capacity.

18 Failing to address methane emissions will only
19 compound the challenges that natural gas is already facing due
20 to the falling cost of alternative resources and technologies.
21 Both public and commercial awareness of the problem is growing.
22 As you know from the New York Times, we covered it prominently
23 in June 2018. Methane emissions is a public issue now.

24 As a climate conscious world grows more aware of
25 the impact of methane emissions, natural gas will come under

1 the same pressure as coal and other fossil fuels that gas is
2 supposedly replacing.

3 In more traditional gas markets for heat and
4 industrial processes and as input to chemical processing we see
5 simultaneous trends in largest cities, the biggest
6 corporations, in global transport, and in heavy industries to
7 accelerate efforts to manage greenhouse gas and methane
8 emissions on the production, sale, and use of their products
9 and services. This pressure from the downstream value chain
10 will put growing pressure on energy suppliers to deliver low
11 emissions gas inputs creating additional challenges for
12 traditional natural gas suppliers in the U.S. industry.

13 Especially in light of the amazing production and
14 cost advantages of U.S. produced gas, a roll back of methane
15 emissions regulation now is short-sighted and is impact
16 foolish, and it moves the ignored emerging signals for the oil
17 and gas industry's most critical customers and growing
18 competition from alternatives that promise advantages in both
19 cost and climate impact.

20 Thank you for the opportunity.

21 MR. FRUH: We will now go to Speaker 21.

22 MS. DIANE RABSON: Thank you. Can you hear me
23 okay? I have a very damaged voice, so I will try to be as
24 understandable as I can. Good morning. Thank you again for
25 the opportunity to speak today.

1 My name is Diane Rabson, that's R-A-B-S-O-N.

2 Diane, first name. I am from Boulder, Colorado. I am here
3 today because I am extremely concerned about any EPA proposal
4 to weaken methane emission standards. Methane, as you know is
5 a very small, but potent contributor to global warming.

6 According to Robert Henson, the author of the
7 seminole book, The Thinking Person's Guide to Climate Change,
8 it's estimated that methane's effect on warming is roughly 30
9 times that of carbon dioxide per molecule when measured over
10 one year.

11 A NASA study released this year attributed to
12 renewed rise in methane emissions, in large part from expanded
13 natural gas operations. EPA already has in place an effective
14 leak detection and repair system. Concern considering this,
15 it's very alarming that the Agency would even consider
16 disrupting or even gutting this program, hopefully not.

17 In addition, establishing new rules that fall to
18 some less effective state level standards would have a major
19 impact on air quality and public health in general. I have
20 asthma. I carry my inhaler everywhere. When the air is bad, I
21 know the panic of not being able to catch my breath.

22 I would like to speak personally at this point. My
23 concern about climate change is the future. My grandparents
24 came to America 110 years ago from the Russian empire to escape
25 poverty and extreme violence. They sought safety and

1 opportunity, not only for themselves but for the children,
2 grandchildren and all those who came after them.

3 We have an expression in Hebrew l'dor v'dor, it
4 means from generation to generation. It's part of the Jewish
5 tradition and it has been so for a millennium. My question is:
6 What kind of world will our children inherit? What do we owe
7 them, and what are we doing about the grave hazards we are
8 already experiencing? We owe it not only to my beautiful
9 little granddaughters in San Francisco, who even now are living
10 under what the Guardian newspaper describes as an apocalyptic
11 haze caused by a killer fire, which was probably caused by
12 drought not poor management of forests, but we also owe it to
13 children everywhere.

14 The IPCC estimates that three hundred million
15 people live in many costal delta areas and what we would call
16 megadeltas in places like Bangladesh, Egypt, Vietnam will
17 suffer terribly as climate change progresses, and Mississippi.

18 I strongly urge, I implore, the EPA not to
19 welcome -- excuse me, weaken these standards and to maintain
20 the current leak detection and repair program. It's the moral
21 thing to do.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

24 We will now call Speaker 22.

25 MS. JILL ANTARES HUNKLER: Good morning. My name

1 is Jill Antares Hunkler, and I live in Somerset Township in
2 Belmont County, Ohio. I have been experiencing the hazards of
3 fracking and witnessing the path of destruction caused by this
4 polluting industry.

5 Those of us living in these once peaceful hills are
6 not only dealing with negative health impacts, we are
7 experiencing explosions, fire, contamination of streams,
8 including the death of 70,000 fish, methane leaks that cause
9 lengthy evacuations, air and noise pollution, earthquakes,
10 unsafe roadways due to industry traffic, spring and well water
11 contamination, and depletion of our water supplies by industry
12 withdrawals from our reservoirs, ponds and streams.

13 My family and I live in close proximity to fracking
14 sites, which include a pipeline a few hundred feet from our
15 cabin, many fracking pads, the MarkWest Humphreys compressor
16 station, and a few miles away a massive transfer station. We
17 have experienced negative health impacts from this development.
18 Due to the invasiveness of shale development, Ohio has been
19 described as an occupied territory by many living in the area.
20 I never imagined that my healthy, quiet, country way of life
21 would disappear.

22 At every stage of development fracking
23 infrastructure emits hazardous air pollutants, including
24 methane. There is highly toxic flaring that has occurred at
25 the site right near my village in Barnesville. There was a

1 drastic rise in asthma like symptoms, so that a doctor was a
2 quoted in a local paper as saying he had seen an increase in
3 asthma since the oil and gas industry arrived, and he was
4 concerned about the flaring occurring so close to our town and
5 local hospitals. Many communities now living -- are living
6 very close to fracking and these polluting sites, including the
7 wells contaminant tanks, pipelines, injection wells, compressor
8 and transfer stations, they are all emitting unsafe levels of
9 hazardous air pollutants.

10 Here is just a small glimpse into my own personal
11 fracking horror story. MarkWest has been found to be in
12 significant and ongoing violations of the Clean Air Act and
13 Ohio Pollution Control Act at the Humphreys compressor station,
14 which was built on the hill above my home.

15 First, we noticed the odor and had nose, eye, and
16 throat irritation, as well as headaches. Then the symptoms
17 worsened to disorientation, numbness, body aches and pain,
18 rashes, vertigo. I began researching the health effects of
19 compressor stations and became very alarmed. I was introduced
20 to others who lived near compressor stations who suffered from
21 similar ailments and became convinced there was an emissions
22 problem at the station.

23 On July 14th, 2015, Earthworks, used an optical gas
24 imaging camera called the FLIR, to film Humphreys station. And
25 you could clearly see the pollution coming off of this

1 facility, crossing the fence line and the clouds of pollution
2 billowing towards my home in the valley about a mile away. I
3 cried and shivered because seeing is not just believing, but
4 rather knowing you are being poisoned by this industry.

5 I talked to a neighbor who had similar health
6 complaints and I had a stark realization. No one is protecting
7 us. Not the U.S. EPA, not the Ohio EPA, not the Ohio
8 Department of Resources, not our elective representatives.
9 There is no one looking out for those living next to
10 industrialized facilities. No one is monitoring for toxic
11 chemicals released into the air. Without measurements, people
12 don't know what is making them sick, and the company is off the
13 hook.

14 After receiving resident complaints for more than a
15 year, the Ohio EPA finally inspected the Humphreys compressor
16 station using a FLIR camera, which confirmed that the vapors
17 are being released from a valve that connects all five storage
18 tanks that was supposed to have 100 percent containment. It
19 was all coming out.

20 The vapor recovery unit was not operating in a
21 manner to capture and control volatile organic compounds,
22 consistent with its permit conditions. U.S. EPA has noted
23 serious compliance issues with the type of VRU used at a
24 Humphreys compressor station. More than three years, three
25 years after the violations were issued the pollution is still

1 occurring at Humphreys compressor station on the hill above my
2 home. We had to move from our home. Once I saw the pollution
3 and knew the health impacts, we are refugees, I left my home.
4 I have been living with family.

5 In October of 2018, Earthworks took additional FLIR
6 images and the same amount of pollution is still coming off
7 that facility. Also the U.S. EPA's draft consent decree,
8 MarkWest is included in that for the Humphreys compressor
9 station, which also proves it still has violations and a
10 pollution problem.

11 There are compressor stations that are a permanent
12 source of air and odor pollution for some surrounding
13 communities. My last conversation with the EPA --

14 MR. FRUH: Ma'am.

15 MS. JILL ANTARES HUNKLER: May I please continue?
16 I know you are ahead of schedule, just for a few remarks, I
17 just want to say a few more things about what's happening with
18 regulatory capture in Ohio.

19 MR. FRUH: Thirty seconds.

20 MS. JILL ANTARES HUNKLER: Okay. We are
21 experiencing regulatory capture in Ohio. Ohio has the least
22 restrictive rules for fracking radioactive waste. Some
23 critical regulations have never been written. There were 1,500
24 wells drilled in Ohio before a single regulation was written.
25 We have 240 injection wells and 13 more pending due to the

1 least restrictive rules in the country for fracking. And --

2 I'm sorry.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

5 Number 23, please.

6 MR. EAN THOMAS TAFOYA: My name is Ean Thomas
7 Tafoya. I am an engineer from Denver, Colorado. I am the
8 Treasurer of the Colorado Latino Forum. The Colorado Latino
9 Forum is a non-profit organization of thousands of Latinos and
10 Latinas in Colorado, and our mission to increase the political,
11 social, educational and economic strength of U.S. Latinos and
12 Latinas in our area. And we happen to represent families and
13 children that live in close proximity to extraction wells,
14 particularly in northern Colorado.

15 Now I understand that land use pressure is a
16 driving industry in helping keep together things under your
17 purview. These are local zoning debates and we continue to
18 engage in them here locally. What is under your purview is the
19 safety and operation of facilities. And I am here today to
20 oppose EPA's New Source Performance Standards changes.

21 Allowing weaker standards shouldn't be decided by
22 only helping industry, not residents. And redundancies, though
23 sometimes seem useless exist to ensure protection. We here in
24 Colorado are pleased that our hard work to rein in methane laws
25 by improving public health was accomplished.

1 Our local industry extraction industry hasn't
2 closed its doors. These standards were modeled off the work we
3 did here. The changes come across like a slap in the face for
4 all the hard work that we fought to come to a compromise to here
5 in Colorado.

6 Lastly, I would like to express my frustration and
7 my disappointment that I am even here. I recently testified in
8 DC about the roll back with chemical disaster rules. Having
9 large public hearings and rule changes like this every few
10 years is a waste of the EPA's resources and community time.

11 Furthermore, uncertainty delays the establishment
12 of low cost procurement channels for development of these
13 industries. These rules are good for people and for the
14 economy.

15 In closing, I would like to agree with all the
16 comments regarding climate science and concern for all the
17 youth around the world. But I will reiterate the industry has
18 lived under these rules for at least a year and longer in
19 Colorado and the sky has not fallen. Please be bold in
20 protecting people and the global economy by continuing with the
21 current rules.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. FRUH: We will call Speaker 24, Number 24.

24 MR. JAMES THERRIEN: Good morning. My name is
25 James Therrien, T-H-E-R-R-I-E-N. I am here in two positions, I

1 guess. I am representing Sister Joan Brown with New Mexico
2 Interfaith Power and Light and I have a statement she wants me
3 to read, and then I have a personal testimony I will share.

4 New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light works with
5 churches, and mosques, and temples across New Mexico to care
6 for creation in communities. We work to prevent the greatest
7 harms from climate change with positive efforts, especially for
8 the most vulnerable.

9 Our faith communities are the ones who minister
10 with people when they suffer health problems from pollution.
11 Our communities are the ones who address the needs of the
12 vulnerable populations who are suffering from climate change.
13 For us, preventing methane pollution from the oil and gas
14 industry, which is 86 times more power than carbon dioxide in
15 creating climate change, is an ethical and moral concern.

16 The responsibility of the EPA is for the common
17 good. Weakening oil and gas pollution standards acts directly
18 against the mission of the EPA to protect the health and safety
19 of the children, adults and families. In addition, these rules
20 were part of the promise the United States made that assisted
21 in affirming the Paris Climate Agreement, which all of the
22 major religious traditions and governing bodies support.

23 So people of faith and faith leaders from 85
24 congregations representing some 25,000 people throughout New
25 Mexico want clean air and responsible stewardship for resources

1 and creation. Rolling back EPA's methane standards is
2 polluting the air and land which is sacred. It is committing
3 abuse to our Earth and communities of life.

4 The EPA standards right now were reduced emissions
5 from over 36,000 wells all around the country, including
6 cutting 21,000 tons of methane, around 6,000 tons of smog
7 forming volatile organic compounds, and 45,000 pounds of toxic
8 pollutants.

9 On a personal note, I live in Lybrook, New Mexico,
10 which is the heart of the oil and gas boom at this moment in
11 New Mexico. As a matter of fact, we are going to have a rally
12 next month in opposition to the 4,800 acres to be released out
13 for more oil and gas.

14 I moved to New Mexico with my family in 2013 and I
15 remember looking over the landscape and just being in awe of
16 all the blue skies. I came from Kansas, so the mountains and
17 mesas were a welcome sight. Within a few months, however, the
18 landscape began to change. Yes, there was an increase in
19 wells, truck traffic, unknown company workers, fracking rigs
20 and chemicals. But the biggest change is the methane haze that
21 now surrounds several communities. This haze can be easily
22 seen when one is traveling on Highway 550. The haze is seen
23 looming over Broomfield and Farmington. It seems wherever one
24 looks the haze is there.

25 My wife teaches at a reservation school and

1 community ranch school, and the methane haze sits on top of
2 that compound almost year around. That means that there is 185
3 children that are exposed to the methane and the other
4 chemicals that come along with it.

5 If you roll back the methane ruling, then that will
6 open up more oil and gas exploration in our area, which will
7 increase more chemicals being introduced into the community, a
8 community that is not accustomed to having benzines and all
9 these other chemicals in their area. Granted, methane does
10 dissipate over time, but when you live in the area that we live
11 in that has canyons, and valleys, and low-lying areas, that
12 time can be a year at a time.

13 Kids have to come up -- get up every morning and
14 smell this. Elderly are getting sick from this. Asthma is on
15 the rise. It is time for EPA to take a stand against the Trump
16 Administration.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

19 Before we continue, at this time we will take a
20 ten-minute break and we will reconvene. It's 9:47, so 9:57,
21 58. Let's plan to reconvene so we can stay on schedule.

22 Thank you.

23 (Recess from 10:47 a.m. to 11:02 a.m.)

24 (The following session is being heard by EPA Panel
25 members Steve Fruh, Abby Fulton and Jonathan Witt.)

AB Court Reporting & Video

1 MR. FRUH: We are going to reconvene the public
2 hearing. And we have a new panelist, Abby Fulton.

3 MS. FULTON: Hi. I am Abby Fulton, I work here in
4 Region 8 in EPA's Office of Partnership and Regulatory
5 Assistance.

6 MR. FRUH: Okay. We will start back with Speaker
7 Number 29.

8 MS. JANE WORTHINGTON: Hello, and thank you for the
9 opportunity to speak today, J-A-N-E, W-O-R-T-H-I-N-G-T-O-N. I
10 do have written testimony here, but sometimes I get off track
11 because I speak from my own sleeve. I am Jane Worthington and
12 I am from McDonald, Pennsylvania. I have come along to give
13 you the message that you cannot roll back, you cannot roll back
14 any methane regulations.

15 I live in Washington County in the Township of
16 Robinson, previously in Mount Pleasant Township. We live on
17 one of the largest reserves of the shale in the world and
18 heaviest fracked counties and townships in Pennsylvania. This
19 is an agricultural and rural area with only one school
20 district, Fort Cherry. We call it Fort Cherry, Home of the
21 Rangers. It was previously a fort, a safe place for children.
22 I now unaffectionately call Fort Cherry, Home of the Dangers.

23 I moved into the Fort Cherry District about ten
24 years ago, and when I moved in so did the oil and gas industry.
25 I am a pretty active parent, I am a grandparent, a foster

1 parent, a member of Moms Clean Air, as well as an LPN and
2 advocate for children's health when I moved here. I moved
3 there for the rural atmosphere, for the clean air, and for the
4 country living that we all expect to have.

5 My family was a welcome addition to this community.
6 I soon found out that the gas and oil industry was not and is
7 not. What could have been a great relationship between
8 community and industry quickly went wrong. It went in the
9 wrong direction as careless procedures and no accountability
10 became apparent to all.

11 My granddaughter, who attended Fort Cherry began to
12 have asthma and breathing issues. At first this was thought to
13 be allergic in nature, but testing proved otherwise. So the
14 doctor suggested that I begin to look at her atmosphere. I
15 begin to take a more serious look at what was going on around
16 me, and I realized there was construction everywhere.

17 I learned that it was the gas and oil industry and
18 pads being developed. This opened up a brand new chapter in my
19 life. I began to ask questions and nobody, not the local
20 officials, that state officials, the township officials had any
21 answers. I began to ask who is accountable for the pollution?
22 It was definitely pollution causing problems. And how much
23 pollution can we endure while you develop these gas and oil
24 pads?

25 I went to township meetings, and I was not

1 welcomed. I was insulted, threatened, called names and asked
2 to leave. The whole time, all I was asking is: Where is the
3 DEP, where is the Department of Education, and especially,
4 where is the EPA? Why are there 20 or more active well pads
5 being built around a rural school? One school campus is
6 campusing our entire kindergarten through 12th grade.

7 These well pads are all within one-half mile, 20
8 active wells with 25 more permits pending, all within a half
9 mile of the school campus, give or take a few feet. Now I
10 notice my daughter was getting sicker with frequent nose
11 bleeds, uncontrolled bruising, eye infections, joint swelling
12 and joint pain.

13 The joint became so bad that one day while working
14 at school with her pencil in her hand her arm locked as did her
15 wrist and the pencil could not come out of her hand. The
16 school nurse called me, I called a family doctor who finally
17 said, tell me about the dangers of drilling and fracking.

18 He suggested we get toxicological testing and he
19 was not convinced he would find anything, but an MRI showed
20 that her growth plates were irregular and not in normal
21 positioning, possibly she had been exposed to something. This
22 was a rare possibility he said, but we will look into it.

23 Getting the testing done was another chore, it took
24 almost three weeks. The labs don't do that kind of testing,
25 especially on a pediatric patient, and he is the only

1 toxicologist in the Pittsburgh area for over 250 miles.

2 Finally we got a lab to agree to take the testing, and it was
3 sent to a forensic lab in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. And what
4 did it come back with? Low level benzene. Benzene, where did
5 she get that from? I realize now that the gas and oil industry
6 is a dirty, nasty, harming industry that is harming the health
7 and safety of children across the country. You want to talk
8 about accountability, everybody should be accountable for what
9 is happening to these children and somebody should be taking
10 responsibility, responsibility for the health and the safety.

11 I have personally approached and spoken on record
12 to township supervisors, judges, the attorney general's
13 offices, senators, congressmen, house representatives, other
14 parents, DEP, Department of Education, and of course, I have
15 testified in front of the EPA.

16 When it comes to accountability, nobody wants to
17 take it. There is very little. My daughter is not the only
18 sick child with unexplained illnesses. Current count in our
19 small rural school is nearing 20 previous or current students.
20 In May of 2018 my daughter became blind, unable to walk. She
21 had an unknown neurological disorder. She has worked hard.
22 She is in the next courtroom next door, 15 years old ready to
23 testify.

24 I am here today to make aware that the problems of
25 pollution are not something that are going to happen, they are

1 something that did happen, and they are real. The children are
2 real. My daughter is real, her name is Alexis, she is 15 years
3 old, and she is waiting her turn to tell you what has happened.

4 The EPA, the acting EPA director, and President
5 Trump, and the industry should be listening to me. I am a mom.
6 I am a citizen. You need to protect me, my children, and all
7 the children.

8 I am speaking to you today to demand that you keep
9 these rules intact. My daughter cannot tolerate any other
10 decision. You must protect us, not the polluters.

11 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

12 MS. JANE WORTHINGTON: I will answer anything you
13 have to ask.

14 MR. FRUH: No questions. If you would like to
15 provide the transcript that would be fine.

16 I will now call Speaker Number 30.

17 MR. JACOB SCHLESINGER: Good morning. My name is
18 Jacob Schlesinger. I am an attorney with the law firm of Keyes
19 and Fox here in Denver, Colorado. I am here today representing
20 the Center for Methane Emissions Solutions. Thank you for the
21 opportunity to offer comment today.

22 The Center is a national coalition that represents
23 the views of companies in the methane mitigation industry in
24 the United States, specifically in the leak detection or LDAR
25 space. The methane mitigation industry is a robust and growing

1 American industry. A 130 companies have headquarters in the
2 United States, and there are approximately 570 methane
3 mitigation facilities located across the country.

4 These facilities include manufacturing plants,
5 assembly facilities, service centers, service providers and
6 administrative officers. We represent a range of companies
7 within the industry and we were founded to provide a voice for
8 American businesses that develop and deliver innovative
9 solutions to significantly cut methane waste on a
10 cost-effective basis across the oil and gas industry.

11 We are deeply disappointed that the Environmental
12 Protection Agency is undergoing a rule-making process to roll
13 back common sense standards to regulate methane emissions from
14 oil and gas operations. These rules were developed with
15 considerable input from industry and sent an important signal
16 to markets across the country that methane waste should be
17 monitored and repaired.

18 In the United States, the oil and gas sector is the
19 largest industrial source of methane emissions. These
20 emissions represent a significant economic challenge. Every
21 year America losses nearly \$2,000,000,000 worth of methane due
22 to inefficiencies at oil and gas well sites, including faulty
23 equipment, venting, and flaring processes.

24 Responding to this market challenge, companies have
25 developed effective low cost LDAR services and technologies

1 that reduce wasteful methane emissions. Indeed, several firms
2 provide LDAR surveys at well sites for as low as \$250. While
3 most American LDAR firms are small businesses, the growing
4 methane mitigation industry has created thousands of high
5 scaled, high paying, and geographically diverse jobs that
6 cannot be off-shored.

7 Our support for the existing rule is supported by
8 several factual premises. First, leaks are caused both by
9 equipment failure and by operator error. In an exhaustive
10 study of super emitting leaks in the Barnett Shale region, the
11 authors of the study concluded that equipment malfunctions and
12 error-inducing workforce conditions are the most common causes
13 of excess emissions related to avoidable operating conditions.

14 This point is critical because it demonstrates that
15 monitoring based on age or quality of equipment is not
16 sufficient and that regular monitoring as a current rule
17 requires is necessary. Another important point is that once
18 detected, it is almost always cost-effective for the producer
19 to repair the leaks.

20 In fact, a study that we conducted of oil and gas
21 companies complying with Regulation 7 in Colorado, which is
22 even a stricter approach than the rule we are discussing today,
23 the respondents found overwhelmingly that by complying with the
24 regulation, it was either breaking even or saving money as a
25 result.

1 Therefore, we urge the Environmental Protection
2 Agency to consider the views of CMES, and most importantly our
3 members who are Americans with small businesses that have
4 distinguished track record of working with oil and gas
5 companies to devise common sense solutions that address methane
6 waste in an efficient manner. It is our view that the existing
7 rule meets that threshold and we urge the administration to
8 allow it to stand.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. FRUH: For the record, could you spell your
11 last name.

12 MR. JACOB SCHLESINGER: S-C-H-L-E-S-I-N-G-E-R.

13 MR. FRUH: We will now call Speaker 31.

14 MR. JIM RAMEY: Good morning. My name is Jim
15 Ramey, and it's R-A-M, as in Mary, E-Y. And I am here
16 representing The Wilderness Society. Thank you for the
17 opportunity to offer comment.

18 I am here today to speak out in opposition to the
19 Trump Administration proposed roll back of the EPA's New Source
20 Performance Standards. Weakening the common sense
21 cost-effective standards will hurt the communities where these
22 developments exist and ignore the EPA's responsibility to
23 protect the health and safety of American families.

24 The Trump Administration has continually tried to
25 gut both the EPA and Bureau of Land Management's methane rules

1 for over a year now, and the Administration's most recent
2 actions are among the most egregious yet.

3 The EPA and BLM rolled these rules back and they
4 were seven days apart from one another and together these roll
5 backs are a huge give away to the nation's worst run of oil and
6 gas companies at the expense of the American's people health
7 and their pocketbooks.

8 Rolling back EPA's methane standards is a blatant
9 attack on our health, especially for those who live near these
10 facilities and depend on these protections to keep the air they
11 breathe clean. The EPA standards in place right now would have
12 reduced emissions from over 36,000 wells around the nation,
13 included cutting 21,635 tons of methane, about 6,000 tons of
14 smog forming volatile organic compounds, and 450,000 pounds of
15 toxic air pollutants each and every year. The Trump
16 Administration should keep these proven, cost-effective
17 safeguards in place instead of putting the health of your
18 families and our future generations are risk.

19 In Colorado we are very fortunate to have some of
20 best methane rules in the country; however, our state rules
21 don't provide any protection for Coloradans who live on the
22 western slope, and they suffer from air pollution that does not
23 respect state lines and crosses over from Utah and New Mexico,
24 nor have Colorado's rules solved the constant challenge we face
25 here on the Front Range in being in the ozone non-attainment.

1 And I see this personally each and every summer
2 with alerts in my e-mail that come up nearly every day saying
3 there is an ozone action day in place. So in Colorado, where
4 we are leading the nation in methane reduction, our state rule
5 is still not good enough.

6 Methane is also a great danger to our planet with
7 over 80 times the warming power of carbon pollution, methane is
8 a dangerous driver of climate change. Right now oil and gas
9 industrial facilities release at least 8.1 million metric tons
10 of methane pollution each year, the same impact as operating
11 over 150 coal-fired power plants for a year, or put another
12 way, driving 145 million cars for a year.

13 Rolling back the EPA's methane rules would mean
14 more potent climate pollution in the United States, across the
15 country with a promise of cleaner air and healthier
16 communities. With these rules gone we are now relying on a
17 patchwork of inconsistent state regulations. Instead of having
18 a set of comprehensive rules, we are now relying on
19 requirements that vary significantly from state to state.

20 The reality is these standards are common sense,
21 cost-effective, and feasible, and they do not harm the oil and
22 gas industry. Our state has shown that there are easy and
23 effective ways to reduce methane pollution. In fact, when
24 Colorado passed its new requirements in 2014, the number of
25 active wells actually increased, and overall production

1 actually increased as well.

2 Between 2014 and 2017, Colorado's natural gas
3 production increased about three percent, oil production is up
4 37 percent, and a number of oil and gas wells increased by
5 about 4 percent. Moreover, Colorado has seen a 75 percent
6 reduction in the reported leaks and in a recent survey from the
7 oil and gas production companies found that most operators
8 believe the state's rules to be cost-effective.

9 Rolling back the EPA's methane pollution standards
10 at the same time as the BLM rules, which are now gone, would be
11 reckless and take us backwards at a time when we can and need
12 to implement solutions to cut methane solutions quicker than
13 ever.

14 Thank you again for the opportunity to share our
15 comments with you today.

16 MR. FRUH: Thank you. We will call Speaker 32.

17 MS. LAURIE WILSON: Hi. My name is Lauri Wilson,
18 Wilson with one L, and Laurie the old fashioned Irish way.
19 L-A-U-R-I-E.

20 I am here today because Northern Plains Resource
21 Council from Montana asked my husband and I to come here and
22 speak with you. And I have this prepared piece of paper, which
23 I have scribbled all over since I have been here, things that I
24 have heard from other people have made me change my mind on
25 maybe what I should be talking to you about.

1 What I came here to tell you is that the thought of
2 not having any regulations or really removing the ones that we
3 just got is just unconscionable. You guys are the good guys.
4 I mean, I graduated from high school in 1972, and we were
5 saving trees, and we were doing -- saving the whales, and
6 saving all kinds of things, and the EPA was always there, you
7 know, the reason that the laws got changed in the first place.

8 I mean, I am proud to be from Montana, the big sky
9 state, but right now the part of Montana that I am from looks
10 like the big stinky sky state. I am from northeastern Montana,
11 right on the edge of the Bakken oil boom, and there are wells
12 looming over our farmhouse, and in our neighborhood there is
13 over a hundred wells.

14 I have children and grandchildren that live there.
15 Personally, I had to move from Montana eight years ago because
16 my asthma got so bad. And I was born and raised there, so was
17 my husband. And our ranch, the border is the Missouri River
18 and North Dakota. We are 60 miles from Canada.

19 You look at this Bakken play right now, the light
20 pollution that comes off of there, if you look at a big world
21 map or big sky photo, the light that comes off of there from
22 all the burning flares. I was just recently in Montana
23 visiting. I can't stay there for very long periods of time,
24 but I was there a couple summers ago and I had asthma so bad.

25 It was warm, and I was home alone, I had to get

1 myself picked up off the floor and get myself to the ER in
2 Williston, North Dakota, which is like 20 miles away. They got
3 me going again. I have a little grandson that lived in North
4 Dakota, he had asthma. They have had to bring the ambulance to
5 the playground to pick him up off the playground because his
6 asthma is so bad, and there's all these oil wells on their way.

7 Going back a little bit in time, my son is 35 years
8 old. He was born and raised within a quarter of a mile of a
9 flaring oil well. When it didn't flare, it just smelled like
10 rotten eggs and you hoped the wind didn't blow our direction.

11 When I was in Montana recently, it was warm and I
12 said, well, why don't the kids and I go outside and play? And
13 my daughter-in-law said because, mom, it's just too hot today.
14 She says, you can really smell that oil well that's a half a
15 mile away from their house.

16 We needed the EPA to be there for us, to help us
17 ensure that those rules are in place. I looked up on EPA's
18 website this morning, and right there is Andrew Wheeler and he
19 says, "Children's health is a top priority at EPA, and we have
20 made tremendous progress in improving air and water quality and
21 helping kids and families lead healthier lives."

22 My son, who is 35 and grew up right by that oil
23 well, he was always in trouble at school. They said he was
24 attention deficit, and now that I know about children that live
25 next to oil wells, what I have read, what EPA has put out

1 there, I don't need to tell you guys, you are all -- you know,
2 out there.

3 My notes don't say what I said today. I'm not --
4 I won't leave them with you, but please, don't -- I mean, I am
5 ashamed to say that Ryan Vicky is from the State of Montana and
6 the things that he wishes for the United States of America.

7 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

8 Speaker Number 33.

9 MR. ROBERT WILSON: Thank you. My name is Robert
10 Wilson, R-O-B-E-R-T, W-I-L-S-O-N, and Laurie is my wife.

11 For most of my adult life, and together with her,
12 we operated our century-old family cattle ranch located
13 adjacent to the North Dakota border in the heart of the Montana
14 portion of the area. There are 15 producing oil wells within a
15 mile of our ranch buildings. One is within 900 feet of them.

16 I mention this to show that besides Laurie's health
17 issues, we have had the full tour on almost every aspect of the
18 oil pad. However, I was not always a cattle rancher. In my
19 younger days I was a college English teacher. And as a former
20 English teacher I read the EPA's proposed improvements with
21 horrified fascination.

22 The document is almost a textbook example of
23 rebellion news speak, a terrifying mixture of the passive
24 voice, which is a perfect device to hide actors who possibly
25 wished to be hidden to the completeness use of words. They

1 make improvements synonymous with deregulation. Deregulation
2 is an improvement, I suppose if you are a Houston oil man, but
3 not so much if you live near a tank battery, or a flare pit, or
4 a few pipelines.

5 Finally, and most frightening, the document employs
6 a bizarre variation of the double negative, which occurs in a
7 phrase used frequently in the last few paragraphs. The phrase
8 is, quote, "Emission reductions that would not accord." It
9 appears in the final segment of the improvements, which has
10 the -- and that final segment subheading has a slightly
11 positive sounding subheading cost savings and emission
12 reduction.

13 But when we read this segment carefully, we
14 discover that the cost savings gained by simply -- by oil
15 companies simply cutting back on leak inspections, and by
16 cutting back on inspections, you guessed it, emission
17 reductions would not occur. That means emissions would
18 increase. And what in God's name does increasing emissions
19 have to do with either protecting the environment or improving
20 human health?

21 In controvertible scientific evidence is
22 demonstrating that oil and gas emissions are very dangerous to
23 human health. I will give you a couple of quick examples. In
24 the recent book, Hydraulic Fracturing Impacts and Technologies,
25 by Texas Tech professors by the way, and that not really a hot

1 bed of environmental agitation.

2 The authors point to mounting evidence of a variety
3 of illnesses exacerbated by proximity to oil and gas emissions.
4 Congenital heart defects, breast cancer, upper respiratory
5 disease and leukemia. Infants and the elderly are most
6 vulnerable, and those who live closest to the emission of
7 methane and VOCs at a five times greater risk of contracting
8 noncancerous illnesses than those who live more than 2,500 feet
9 away. Cancer, that's a given. The VOC, benzene is a level one
10 carcinogen.

11 My final example scares me the most because the
12 sample is so huge. In the reference Journal of Science
13 advances a well-funded researcher from Princeton, the
14 University of Chicago, and UCLA examined the birth records of
15 every baby born in Pennsylvania from 2004 until 2013. It's
16 almost 1.1 million babies.

17 They discovered babies born within two miles of a
18 fracked well stood a significantly chance of being underweight
19 and less healthy than a baby born outside that zone. And that
20 has life-long ramifications. The author speculates strongly
21 that the culprit is air pollution. Clearly, evidence points
22 out that this is -- points out that this is not the time to be
23 rolling back regulation.

24 America used to be a beacon on a hill illuminating
25 the rest of the world, and that beacon shone brightly on

1 science and technology. Now the EPA has not only turned its
2 back on its mission to protect the environment and human
3 health, but also seems to be rejecting science itself.

4 I urge you to remember its noble mission and not to
5 continue to be the politicized tool of the current
6 administration. Relaxing or improving the regulation of
7 methane and VOCs, improving -- removing the regulation of
8 methane and VOCs invites catastrophe. History is watching us.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. FRUH: We will now call Speaker Number 34.

11 MS. DEE DEE BELMARES: Good morning. My name is
12 Dee Dee Belmares? I am from San Antonio, Texas. I am speaking
13 as a member of Moms Clean Air Force, and as a resident who
14 lives in the area of Texas that has as much as 4,655 oil and
15 gas operation -- operations. Thank you for the opportunity to
16 comment.

17 I am here today to speak out because I oppose the
18 proposed roll back of the EPA's New Source Performance
19 Standards. These pollution limits protect Texas families from
20 harmful methane pollution. I reject this proposal because I
21 care about the health of my son and the rest of my family.

22 In July of this year in EPA designated San Antonio
23 in non-attainment for ozone. Ozone travels through my county
24 picking up fossil fuel emissions, such as methane coming from
25 the Eagle Ford Shale fracking operations and continues to pass

1 through San Antonio contributing to our poor air quality.

2 This in turn, has created health issues such as
3 respiratory problems. My niece is almost four-year old, her
4 name is Anna, and she has just been diagnosed with asthma.

5 This isn't coincidental. I also reject this proposal because
6 my friends and family who live in Carrizo Springs, Texas, who
7 are suffering from respiratory problems and constant migraine
8 headaches from the methane emissions from oil and gas
9 operations there. They can't be here to speak for themselves
10 today.

11 The EPA has a responsibility to protect the health
12 and safety of Texas families. The standards that are in place
13 right now help clean up our air from our families and children
14 playing near and far downwind from oil and gas operations.

15 Methane is also a powerful, short-lived greenhouse
16 gas and contributor to man made climate change. Oil and gas
17 industrial facilities release 8.1 million metric tons of
18 methane pollution a year. Rolling back the methane rules will
19 mean more dangerous climate pollution and deny Texans the
20 promise of clean air and a healthier future for the most
21 vulnerable, our children and senior citizens.

22 We have all seen extreme weather events in recent
23 years. Just over a year ago, Texas was devastated from
24 hurricane Harvey. There are towns and communities still that
25 have not recovered from the devastating effects of that

1 hurricane. And now we are witnessing, as we have been, the
2 deadly wild fires that are ravaging California.

3 We need climate action now. These common sense
4 pollution controls are working to protect our families now and
5 into the future. Any action by Trump or Wheeler will take us
6 into the direction that will put our families and children at
7 further risk.

8 I brought some pictures from the Eagle Ford Shale
9 in South Central Texas. What is disheartening, scary and
10 frustrating is the flaring from a stack that is so close to a
11 playground where children play. Children playing and exposed
12 to methane pollution because they are breathing this every
13 single day.

14 The other picture that I have shows a small group
15 of houses with a stack flaring in the background. Once again,
16 these families are being exposed to dangerous methane pollution
17 every single day of their lives. The New Source Performance
18 Standards are the only protections in place to keep those
19 families and especially their children safe.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

22 For the record, could you spell your last name.

23 MS. Dee Dee BELMARES: B-E-L-M-A-R-E-S.

24 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

25 We will now call Speaker Number 37.

1 MR. DAN GREENBERG: Good morning. My name is Dan
2 Greenberg, G-R-E-E-N-B-E-R-G. Thanks for the opportunity to
3 speak to you this morning. I am speaking today in opposition
4 to the EPA administrator's proposed roll back of LDAR on
5 regulations for the oil and gas industry. I am not the first
6 and I am sure I won't be the last today to bring to mind the
7 unspeakable destruction brought in recent months by the
8 hurricanes that hit Florida and the Carolinas, or the
9 fire-driven devastation currently underway across the state of
10 California.

11 These disasters have and are continuing to destroy
12 the lives and crush the hopes of entire communities of our
13 fellow citizens. We see these images of these disasters
14 nightly on the news, and listen to the emotion choked words of
15 survivors whose worlds have been turned upside down.

16 We reflect on the massive wild fires that have
17 visited our state this year, on the drought conditions that
18 have persisted here for years, and the fact that the U.S.
19 Drought Monitor released data in September showing that 64
20 percent of this state is experiencing severe drought.

21 And then we reflect on the fact that these
22 disasters are precisely what our atmospheric scientists tell --
23 tell us we should expect more and more of as climate change
24 intensifies. And yet somehow this administration thinks it's a
25 good idea to allow oil and gas producers to emit more and more

1 of this extremely powerful greenhouse gas into the atmosphere.

2 The industry loves to advertise the environment
3 benefits of fossil methane. We have all seen the adds by the
4 American Petroleum -- Petroleum Institute and Coloradans for
5 Responsible Energy Development celebrating how much cleaner our
6 environment is now that gas is displacing coal as the fossil
7 fuel of choice for generating electricity.

8 But those claims ring hollow, and in fact, become
9 infuriating when one takes into account that the U.S. domestic
10 oil and gas industry emits about 13 million metric tons of
11 fossil methane per year, and that over a 20-year life time
12 frame, methane is 84 times as powerful greenhouse gas as carbon
13 dioxide, and that leakage of just 2.8 percent of production
14 makes methane every bit as bad for the planet as coal used to
15 generate electricity.

16 EDF estimates that the average industry leakage is
17 2.3 percent. I did some math to try to comprehend just what 13
18 million metric tons of methane means. It's pretty easy to
19 convert 13 million metric tons into million cubic feet. The
20 answer is 678,813 million cubic feet. From there it's easy to
21 put this amount of leakage into perspective using consumption
22 data from the Energy Information Administration.

23 What I learned is that the annual methane leakage
24 from our domestic industry equates to 5.7 times the total
25 annual consumption of all residences in Colorado last year, or

1 if you -- or if you include consumption from all sectors, the
2 annual leakage from U.S. industry is about one and a half
3 Coloradans.

4 The industry wastes one and a half times as much as
5 this entire state consumes in an entire year. And yet somehow
6 this administration believes that's not enough. That it's just
7 too costly for this poor downtrodden, marginally profitable
8 industry to prevent this deadly gas from escaping into the air
9 we breathe. Unbelievable.

10 So I did a bit more research to learn about the
11 economic burden the industry would have to bear should this
12 administration's EPA somehow find the integrity to stick to its
13 guns and require the industry to actually find and repair the
14 leaks responsible for this one and a half Coloradans per year.

15 It didn't take long for me to find that 2014 study
16 conducted by the respected consulting firm ICF. And in its
17 study, ICF developed a supply curve for mitigating methane
18 leakage, which I have copied at the bottom of my testimony.

19 The short story is that ICF found that 163 billion
20 cubic feet or about .4 Colorado's of leakage could be abated at
21 an average cost to the industry of less than one cent per
22 thousand cubic feet, one sent. And yet somehow this
23 administration has convinced itself that this is just too heavy
24 a burden for the industry to bear, that this miniscule cost of
25 clean up is not worth the very tangible direct benefits to

1 human health or to award the very large contribution that .4 of
2 Colorado's per year of leakage makes towards accelerating
3 climate change.

4 Meanwhile over in the Europe the Shell has taken a
5 different tact. In announced in September that its
6 implementing a program that will reduce its corporate wide
7 methane emissions to just 0.2 percent of production no later
8 than 2025.

9 If Shell can clean up its act voluntarily, then
10 surely we can demand or industry spend one cent more per MCF to
11 clean itself up. Please, do not roll back these common sense
12 regulations.

13 MR. FRUH: Speaker Number 38.

14 MS. MARIA GUERRERO: Hi there. My name is Maria
15 Guerrero. I am from Aurora, Colorado. I am speaking as a
16 member of Moms Clean Air Force. I am an active community
17 member and a Latino mother with two beautiful daughters. I am
18 here today because as a caring mother who understands the pain
19 in having a sick child, I want to inherit clean water and clean
20 air to my kids and the generations to come.

21 This issue is far bigger than we can imagine.
22 Successful or not, we will all go down in history and we will
23 be remembered. We shall be remembered as part of the solution
24 or we will be remember as the moms who put up a fight with
25 nothing but the best intentions in our hearts for a better,

1 cleaner, healthier future.

2 I am also here to speak out in opposition to Donald
3 Trump's and Environmental Protection EPA's Acting Administrator
4 Andrew Wheeler, proposed roll back of the EPA's New Source
5 Performance Standards, pollution limits that protect American
6 families from harmful methane solutions.

7 The oil and gas industry recklessly leaks 9 million
8 tons of methane and other air pollution into the air every
9 year. Pollution that harms Latino communities health and
10 speeds up climate change. These industrial leaks are like an
11 invisible oil spill happening every day.

12 Air pollution, including methane and toxic
13 chemicals pollutions know no borders. While those who live
14 near oil and gas facilities are uniquely affected by this
15 harmful pollution, Latino communities and the country are
16 burdened with outside health and climate impacts.

17 Associated with the oil and gas industry activities
18 oil and gas production produces volatile organic compounds,
19 VOCs, and nitrogen oxides, which combine to form ozone smog.
20 This pollution travels across the country and affects both
21 urban and rural communities.

22 Methane leaks from oil and gas facilities directly
23 increase ozone -- ozone smog levels in addition to -- I'm
24 sorry. I think I already read that. But it is important that
25 we keep the EPA strong so that we can keep our health strong,

1 and our children strong, and our future strong. Good health
2 equals a good economy. And so that isn't part of what I wrote
3 here, but I know that it was important to throw out there.

4 With that said, it's just -- I feel like Colorado
5 has been doing really good on a local level, but we do have to
6 keep our EPA strong at a national level because our weather
7 just gets so affected by -- by either the different slopes.

8 Like we can get toxic -- what was it? We can get
9 acid rain in states where it didn't really begin and we can't
10 continue to ignore these problems. Change begins when we
11 acknowledge. We are dealing with an issue and I feel like most
12 of us are on the same page, at least the majority. In this
13 case it's something that affects both our health and our
14 planet.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. FRUH: Thank you. Could you spell your last
17 name for the record.

18 MS. MARIA GUERRERO: G-U-E-R-R-E-R-O.

19 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

20 MR. KYLE FERRAR: Good morning. Thank you for
21 having -- having me. My name is Kyle Ferrar, that's
22 F-E-R-R-A-R get that out of the way.

23 I am the Western Program Coordinator for the
24 FracTracker Alliance, and I am also the California state
25 manager for Earthworks' Community Empowerment Project. And I

1 am here to speak out against the roll back of the LDAR New
2 Source Performance Standards.

3 So I have been working on shale gas issues and
4 unconventional drilling issues, fracking issues for about ten
5 years now. My doctoral research focused on more soft shale
6 waste water chemistry and disposal, as well as the health
7 impacts near high volume hydraulic fracturing sites in
8 Southwestern Pennsylvania, and now I use exposure assessment
9 tools in California and also right here in Colorado's Front
10 Range.

11 So I work directly with front line communities and
12 grass root organizations. And I want to say we are so lucky,
13 as experts, that have so many representatives of front line
14 communities, particularly indigenous front line communities
15 with us today to share their stories.

16 And I am going to talk a bit about my research and
17 what I do, but really I am here to say, I am here to implore
18 you to listen to them, listen to these front line communities,
19 and not just to listen, but to make an active effort to
20 actually believe them and believe what they have to say because
21 too often we listen, we hear them, but we don't actually
22 believe what they have to say, representatives don't believe
23 what they have to say. Soon to be non Governor Jerry Brown
24 hasn't listened to what they have to say. So I believe them.
25 And I am going to tell you why.

1 So my research has put me on the ground at the
2 fence lines of the oil fields, that's California's Central
3 Valley, that would be your urban and oil and gas drilling in
4 Los Angeles, Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania, and right here in
5 Greeley, Colorado.

6 This is -- these are places where I have the
7 privilege of leaving after I finish my work. The privilege
8 that those communities living on the front lines don't have.
9 As a trained and licensed thermographer, I am able to use
10 optical gas imaging to visualize the vapors, the fugitive
11 emissions leaking from these oil and gas sites; these include
12 wells, wellheads, tanks, compressors, pipelines, regulators.

13 And let me tell you, I have never been in the field
14 with a FLIR camera without documenting leaks from oil and gas
15 equipment. They are always there. They are always there to
16 document. Sometimes it takes a little bit of time, but the
17 leaks are always occurring when you are in the field. And
18 these are leaks that the operators weren't aware of, and very
19 often these are leaks that operators are even thankful to us
20 for reporting so they we can go and take care of them and can
21 fix them.

22 If anyone is familiar with the work that the
23 FracTracker Alliance does, you know that our research typically
24 includes geospatial analyses by pairing GIS mapping with
25 on-the-ground surveillance we know that the leaks that we

1 detect using optical gas imaging are barely the tip of the
2 iceberg.

3 We know the extent of the oil and gas fields, and
4 we know what we are able to see from the roadways and the fence
5 lines, and the distance where we are able to actually see into
6 the oil and gas fields, and it's not very far.

7 And as experts, we don't need to discuss or debate
8 what's in those emissions. And researchers will say that we
9 need more research to know exactly what are the risk drivers,
10 but we know that emissions will at least always contain a
11 cocktail of BTEX chemicals and other carcinogenic and ozone
12 producing VOCs, as well as the methane and the other greenhouse
13 gases.

14 So when I am working at the fence line, I am also
15 regularly feeling the effects of the degraded air quality, of
16 the impacts of air quality. I become light headed, nauseous.
17 I develop migraines if I am there too long, and that is only
18 from short exposures.

19 I often have to wear a respirator when I'm in the
20 communities. And my particular case may be a little anecdotal,
21 but fence line communities from around the world are voicing
22 the same shared experience of health impacts from degraded air
23 quality. And the scientific evidence and the epidemiological
24 -- epidemiological literature supports these painfully obvious
25 conclusions.

1 So again, I am here to ask you that you not just
2 listen, but actually make an effort to believe these front line
3 communities.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. FRUH: We will now call Speaker Number 40.

6 MR. SAM DEE: Good morning. It's my pleasure to be
7 here and with all off you ladies and gentlemen with the EPA
8 testimony. My name is Sam Dee, S-A-M D-E-E, and I am from
9 Montezuma Creek, Utah, on the Navajo Nation, which is in
10 Southeastern Utah. Thank you for this opportunity to offer a
11 comment.

12 I am here today to speak out in opposition of -- to
13 the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed roll back of the
14 EPA's New Source Performance Standards pollution limit that
15 protect Americans, including people from my community, from
16 harmful methane pollution.

17 Leaking methane routes travel to communities like
18 mine. It has been estimated that waste methane including leaks
19 is costing the Navajo Nation millions every year, and not only
20 does this waste travel energy resources, tracks, losses
21 millions of dollars in revenue each year, which includes most
22 roads and bridges, schools, and local improvement projects.

23 We need this funding on the Navajo Nation. We
24 don't need a federal roll back -- roll backs that will make it
25 harder to capture this methane and keep more nature gas in the

1 pipeline and out of our area. And along with methane oil and
2 gas operations on tribal lands, also -- either toxic pollution
3 to the air, polluted air we breathe, and causing rates of
4 asthma attacks in children to increase for instance ozone
5 pollution on tribal lands and Utah Basin.

6 Among the worst levels seen in the country, this
7 air is also home to Utah's two biggest oil and gas producing
8 counties, San Juan County and Uintah, which is right north of
9 Price, Utah. Similarly, San Juan County, New Mexico and La
10 Plata County Colorado are both home to large scale oil and gas
11 development to elevate levels of unhealthy ozone smoke
12 according to the American Lung Association.

13 Oil and gas air pollution is a serious problem on
14 the Navajo Nation, but efforts to address it are affordable and
15 can help get good Navajo jobs in the methane mitigation
16 industry. I should know, I spent my career working in the oil
17 and gas industry on the Navajo Nation. But the roll back of
18 these federal standards will make creating jobs that much
19 harder.

20 More than 130 companies with upwards of 59 -- 99
21 sales and support locations, including one in the valley and a
22 dozen in Utah already working to reduce ozone related methane
23 and other air emissions in oil and gas sector.

24 Now mitigation industry continues to grow, and Utah
25 has only just begun to unlock its potential. After Wyoming

1 adopts similar ozone air standards of energy, one of the
2 largest operators in the area reduced 75 percent of its leak --
3 gas leaks and costs -- cut costs by hundreds of thousands of
4 dollars.

5 The reality of this is, is that standards are a
6 common sense cost-effective and feasible pollution control that
7 do not harm industry. EPA's own analysts found that these
8 standards were achieved and reductions of methane and other
9 harmful air pollution at low cost. The states are continuing
10 to implement successful standards that enjoy -- brought
11 support.

12 For example, energy producing states like Colorado
13 are about to continue their successful efforts to strengthening
14 methane detection and repair. And just recently Pennsylvania
15 instituted its own rules. Rolling back EPA's methane pollution
16 standard would be reckless and take us backwards to a time to
17 where we needed to implement solutions to cut methane pollution
18 quicker than air.

19 Leading oil and gas producers, such as ExxonMobil,
20 Subsidiary XTO say they want to move forward on efforts to
21 reduce methane pollution. Yet so far they and other companies
22 have not spoken up in support of these rules, nor have they
23 asked their trade associations at American Petroleum Institute
24 to stop controlling this roll back.

25 That is why I am here today, and why it's so

1 important for the Navajo to make our voices heard and say no to
2 this misguided roll back.

3 So thank you.

4 MR. FRUH: We will now call Speaker Number 41.

5 MS. GLORIA LEHMER: Hello. My name is Gloria
6 Lehmer. I live in Farmington, New Mexico, and I have been a
7 lifelong resident of that area in San Juan County. I am a
8 member of Moms Clean Air Force. I thank you for the
9 opportunity to speak today.

10 I was a medical speech language pathologist in our
11 Regional Medical Center for 24 years. I was a board member of
12 our local River Reach Foundation, which is dedicated to
13 protection, promotion and enhancement of the three rivers and
14 the riverine corridor that runs through our city. I also
15 volunteer for a myriad of groups who help children, and for
16 those who care about human and environmental justice.

17 I am here today to state that I am against our
18 Administration's proposed roll back of the EPA's New Source
19 Performance Standards pollution limits that protect us from
20 harmful methane pollution. I am concerned for the health and
21 safety of the families who are impacted by emissions and other
22 consequences of the extraction and the industry.

23 My community and the Four Corners area of New
24 Mexico, Colorado, Utah and Arizona have the unfortunate
25 distinction of having a huge methane cloud above us. I was

1 present when scientists from NASA and NOAA came to our local
2 college to report their findings and to travel around our
3 county by bus, van and plane to study the sources or source of
4 the problem.

5 I followed up again after study results were given
6 reporting that the majority of the methane was found
7 concentrated near oil and gas facilities in our area. I have
8 been with those who utilize a FLIR or infrared camera to detect
9 leaks of benzene. I have seen the fumes with my naked eye and
10 have smelled the hazardous fumes at well sites in our area.

11 You see the towns and cultural sites in our
12 beautiful high desert area have oil and gas facilities riddled
13 throughout them. Yes, even within the city limits and near
14 Chaco Canyon and other sacred and sensitive sites and national
15 monuments, and next to rivers, schools and homes, my home.

16 I live near, and on a daily basis drive past well
17 sites near my home. When I look out and go outside, I see a
18 drilling rig and several well pads. Where my husband and I
19 walk our dogs we see an unreclaimed abandoned well pads full of
20 invasive weeds and void of the beautiful pinyon trees,
21 junipers, and other native plants that used to be there. I
22 hear the noise of nearby compressors.

23 When I drive on U.S. Highway 550 to Albuquerque, I
24 see the destruction and the eyesore of swaths of land cleared
25 for roads, pipelines, and well pads. I see pump jacks,

1 drilling rigs, compressor stations, processing plants, and huge
2 storage tanks, open pits, and dangerous, noisy truck traffic.
3 I drive past the large area designated as farmland where
4 contaminated earth is brought from areas near and far,
5 reportedly sometimes treated with chemicals, sometimes not, but
6 often containing unknown chemicals from waste from well sites.
7 At night I can see large flares lighting up the sky and
8 polluting.

9 Since the 1920s, the San Juan Basin of my area and
10 the Permian Basin and southeastern counties of New Mexico, as
11 well as in Texas, have been dependent on the booms of the oil
12 and gas industry. Economies, business and education have lived
13 with the ups and downs of the boom and bust cycles. Although
14 initially opposed to the methane rule for leak detection and
15 repair, some in the industry say they can live with the methane
16 rule, which has been in effect for almost a year without
17 adverse economic impacts.

18 In states such as Colorado, quite the opposite has
19 occurred with reduction in methane emissions and a
20 cost-effective profitable industry, but Donald Trump and Andrew
21 Wheeler are proposing this dangerous roll back, which is likely
22 a precursor towards steps to eliminate the rule. Sadly this
23 fits an agenda of creating loopholes for corporate polluters.

24 I tell you why I am against the roll back and why
25 it is dangerous to communities like the one I live in. Rolling

1 back EPA's methane standards means more pollution in our air
2 and a negative impact on our health, especially for those of us
3 who live near these facilities and depend on these protections
4 to keep the air that we breathe clean and the land and water
5 free from contamination.

6 Our planet is suffering as well. We are witnessing
7 extreme weather from wild fires, the most recent in the
8 deadliest in California history, to hurricanes, tornados and
9 flooding, with over 80 times the warming power of carbon
10 pollution methane is a dangerous contributor to climate change.

11 This proposal for New Source Performance Standards
12 is a step backward and we deserve to move forward to a cleaner
13 energy economy. Our citizens deserve clean air to breathe and
14 good health. The EPA should be responsible in protecting the
15 health and safety of Americans and keep its methane rules
16 strong and intact. Hilcorp or Hillcorp double drilling, is New
17 Mexico ready to become the next Saudi Arabia? These are
18 headlines in my daily newspaper recently. Front page, I say,
19 no, we are not ready for that.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. FRUH: We will now call Speaker Number 45.

22 MS. LILA HOLZMAN: Hello. My name is Lila Holzman,
23 representing As You Sow. We are the nations nonprofit leader
24 in shareholder advocacy working on behalf of investors with
25 \$350 billion worth of shareholder support on critical

1 environmental and social issues over the past year. Thank you
2 for this opportunity to offer comment.

3 I am here today to speak out in opposition to
4 President Trump's and the Environmental Protection Agency
5 Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler's proposed roll back of the
6 EPA's New Source Performance Standards. This act represents
7 the first step in Trump and Wheeler's reported plan to
8 eventually eliminate the direct regulation of methane.

9 Speaking on behalf of long-term investors with a
10 financial interest in the success of the U.S. oil and gas
11 industry, we reject this proposal by the EPA. Methane
12 emissions pose a serious material risk to investors in the oil
13 and gas industry, and comprehensive and common-sense
14 regulations are needed to mitigate that industry-wide risk.

15 Given that methane is a far more potent climate
16 forcer than carbon dioxide, methane emissions tarnish natural
17 gas's reputation as a clean fuel and call into question the
18 role gas can play in a low carbon future.

19 Recent science has found that these emissions are
20 even larger than previously thought. A study in Science found
21 U.S. oil and gas methane emissions may be up to 50 percent
22 higher than current EPA estimates, effectively doubling the
23 20-year climate impact with natural gas as an energy source and
24 nearly erasing the near term climate advantage natural gas has
25 over coal.

1 Furthermore, methane emissions represent lost
2 product, meaning lost value to companies and shareholders.
3 Comprehensive and common sense national standards are needed to
4 mitigate this industry-wide risk.

5 Over 610 different companies accounted for
6 50 percent of U.S. oil and gas production in 2017. This market
7 -- market fragmentation means that while some companies may
8 take steps to reduce methane emissions in their own operations,
9 federal methane rules are needed to ensure the entire industry
10 is operating under best practices.

11 EPA methane regulations can help prevent the entire
12 industry's reputation of natural gas and investment portfolios
13 from being dragged down by the worst actors. Companies
14 including BP, Chevron, ExxonMobil, and Shell have signed on to
15 set up voluntary methane guiding principles intended to reduce
16 methane emissions across natural gas value chains. These
17 principles include a firm public commitment to advocate sound
18 policies and regulations on methane emissions.

19 EPA methane rules are a sound policy that have been
20 in effect for almost a year and backed the cost of compliance
21 for current EPA methane regulations is 20 percent cheaper than
22 previously estimated, yet so far they and other forward looking
23 companies have not spoken up in support of these rules,
24 existing rules, nor have they asked their trade associations
25 like the American Petroleum Institute to stop supporting these

1 senseless roll backs.

2 Investors find this lack of true transparency
3 concerning and would like to see companies demonstrate
4 fulfillment of their commitment to methane advocacy. I am here
5 today to emphasize that this misguided roll back by Trump,
6 Wheeler and the EPA is bad for the bottom line. We urge oil
7 and gas companies to join us in publicly opposing this
8 proposal.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. FRUH: We will call Speaker Number 46.

11 MS. SHAINA OLIVER: Hi. My name is Shaina Oliver.

12 I am with Moms Clean Air Force, and I am a mother of four boys.
13 And I am here because I was diagnosed with asthma within my
14 infancy, as well as I was born with a birth defect, which has
15 become the norm for people that are affected by the
16 exploitation of natural resources.

17 I am an indigenous woman of the Navajo Nation and I
18 am born for Bitter Water Clan on my mother's side and Salt
19 Water Clan on my father's side. And I am here to oppose any
20 changes to the current EPA methane rule.

21 It is relevant to state that the United States
22 adheres, operates under international laws when it comes to
23 doing international trade, as well as oil and gas adheres to
24 international laws. The United Nations in 2007 adopted Article
25 26, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, giving

1 indigenous people more rights pertaining to cultural
2 protections and traditions over ancestral lands.

3 It is not the Government's entity's right alone,
4 but these government entities are supposed to act as a trusted
5 middle man; a middle man that's supposed to protect my inherent
6 right as an indigenous woman of this land.

7 I have an obligation to voice these rights so that
8 my children will continue to retain these rights as well. And
9 it's the responsibility of every man and woman who is a creator
10 of a child into this world to protect that child's right to
11 clean water, clean air and land to go cultivate from. And it
12 is our duty to do what we can. We were all brought here to
13 learn, grow and advance together.

14 That's what the great spirit wished, but how can we
15 get there? How will we get there when the words climate change
16 can't even be brought up in conversation among families. Our
17 ears can't be shut to truth. In order to advance, we can't
18 keep denying our children the truth and replacing it with
19 unsustainability and falsehoods.

20 The United States has yet to dialog or notify
21 tribes or its citizens of how a bankruptcy can affect their
22 sovereignty, this truth cannot be hidden forever. These fossil
23 fuel industries, natural resource extractors and exploiters
24 have yet to acknowledge indigenous rights fully and
25 respectfully. However, they do work within international laws

1 that allow them to take advantage of natural resources.

2 It is time for fossil fuel exploiters and investors
3 to respect indigenous rights and to restore the trust between
4 the first nations people and the nonindigenous people are
5 respecting people's right to water, to clean water, and clean
6 air, and clean land to be sustained for generations to come.

7 The Colorado River and the Rio Grande River are two
8 important water sources to my tribe south of Colorado, as well
9 as ground water uses. These are rivers that are connected to
10 us culturally, traditionally and are part of our oral history,
11 and I do not agree to fossil fuel industry using billions of
12 gallons of water sources that will affect the people's right
13 and access to clean water and clean lands down the road.

14 We should not allow any degrading of any
15 regulations or common sense procedures recommended for safety,
16 and there needs to be a degree of separation of duties in order
17 to certify there are no cover ups or delays on leaks at well
18 sites, as well as along pipelines.

19 According to the EPA's 2018 report of 1990 to 2016,
20 the number of trees to absorb CO2 would have to be three times
21 the size of the U.S., not counting the CO2 thereafter. Even
22 though Americans are not the ones demanding this product, we
23 are the culprit to the deed.

24 It's my ancestors' natural resources these
25 investors are shipping off to foreign investors making a living

1 from Mother Earth's living organism. Polluting my air, water
2 and lands with Mother Earth's resentment to man for defiling
3 her for greed and vanity, she spoils us with her cancer and
4 disease.

5 The United Nations have also most recently made an
6 announcement giving warning to the world, we have a two-year
7 warning to start preparing a plan of action to protect the
8 plants and animals from climate change consequences. I am
9 asking you today to be a hero of the great spirit and not close
10 your ears to truth, but to accept the consequences of our
11 actions and improve on our faults by acknowledging indigenous
12 rights and the generations hereafter right's to clean water,
13 clean air, and clean lands.

14 So please do not roll back protections that provide
15 safety and enforcement that sustains our clean water, clean
16 land and air.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. FRUH: Could you spell your name for the
19 record, please. Could you spell your last name.

20 MS. SHAINA OLIVER: O-L-I-V-E-R.

21 MR. FRUH: Thank you.

22 Speaker Number 47.

23 MS. AMERICA SHERWOOD: Good morning. I am America
24 Sherwood, and I belong to the League of Women Voters of
25 Arapahoe and Douglas Counties here in Colorado. I am also an

1 advocate for the Environment for the League as a member of the
2 Legislative Action Committee. The Colorado League of Women
3 Voters supported ballot -- Colorado ballot issue Proposition
4 112, 112 safer setbacks for oil and gas drilling in midterm.

5 We have also filed an amicus brief in support of
6 our children in their case versus the COGCC, the Colorado Oil
7 and Gas Conservation Commission. And in the Children versus
8 United States case, the League of Women Voters, United States,
9 also supports the children in that case.

10 We recognize that climate change is being caused by
11 the burning of fossil fuels. The science is clear that the
12 Earth is warming at an accelerating pace, so much that the
13 environmental panel on climate change report has given nations
14 and their governments a 12-year window to prevent irreversible
15 catastrophic apocalyptic environmental damage.

16 Climate change presents a national emergency that
17 must be addressed immediately. The many uncontrollable
18 megafires here and around the world, the many floods from
19 melting sea and land ice causing rising sea levels are due to
20 the combination of methane with other dangerous gases which
21 need to be contained.

22 Methane is a potent greenhouse gas. It is a danger
23 to our planet since it has over 87 times the warming power of
24 carbon dioxide, making it a major driver of climate change.
25 Oil and gas facilities emit at least 8.1 million metric tons of

1 methane pollution a year. Methane is a hazard to human lives
2 and needs to be regulated.

3 Methane leaks occur often and unexpectedly around
4 fuel producing sources. Leaks create an immediate danger to
5 the unborn and the young, which is a form of child abuse. In
6 our mile high city of Colorado where heat rises and the air is
7 thinner, methane gas mixed with other poisonous and toxic
8 greenhouse gases creates a cocktail breathed in by everyone.

9 It threatens our lives with heat stroke,
10 dehydration, asthma, lung cancer, COPD, emphysema, inflammation
11 of brain tissue, heart attacks, autoimmune disorders, and DNA
12 changes. After disasters, PTSD disorders also arise. This
13 shows that we also have a public health emergency to address.

14 The United States military recognizes the urgency
15 of immediate action since climate change is a world wide
16 national security issue. The documentary film, The Age of
17 Consequences elaborates on the many destabilizations that are
18 occurring due to food and water shortages, climate change,
19 along with war and government, climate migration will affect us
20 all.

21 Methane rules must be strengthened not weakened in
22 order to give your planet a chance to regain its clean
23 atmosphere to continue sustaining life. Solving this crisis
24 requires many actions with cooperation and collaboration. Our
25 existence is temporary, but what we choose to do now should

1 matter to everyone.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. FRUH: We will call Speaker Number 48.

4 MS. AMELIA MEYERS: Good morning. My name is
5 Amelia Meyers, and I am from Denver. I am representing
6 Conservation Colorado, the state's largest environmental
7 advocacy group with over 45,000 members across the state. I am
8 here today in opposition to the proposed roll back of EPA's New
9 Source Performance Standards.

10 These effective pollution limits protect Americans
11 from harmful methane pollution and should not be rolled back.
12 In Colorado we know the reality of pollution from oil and gas
13 production. That's why we have some of the highest -- the
14 strongest rules for preventing methane pollution from oil and
15 gas in the country. And in spite of these high standards, we
16 are still a large oil and gas producing state.

17 EPA's methane standards are good for public health
18 and protecting our community safety. Rolling back these
19 standards will cause more pollution in the air, especially for
20 people who live near these facilities. Currently the standards
21 in place are preventing 21,000 tons of methane, 6,000 tons of
22 smog forming volatile organic compounds, and 450,000 of other
23 toxic pollutants for being emitted each year. Toxic pollution
24 from the oil and gas industry can worsen smog, trigger asthma
25 attacks, and cause heart problems and even premature death.

1 The administration must keep these proven
2 cost-effective safeguards in place instead of putting the
3 health of Colorado families and future generations at risk.
4 These methane standards are crucial in protecting our climate.
5 Methane pollution contributes to climate change with over 80
6 times the warming power of carbon pollution in its first 20
7 years in the atmosphere.

8 Rolling back the standards would accelerate climate
9 change and intensify the climate impact we are already seeing
10 today. This year alone Colorado suffered one of its worst
11 droughts ever with three of the largest wild fires in history
12 over a span of just four months. At the same time, we are
13 seeing a decreasing snow pack and record high temperatures
14 every year.

15 A recent report by the IPPC found that we need to
16 curb emissions within the next 12 years or we will be on a
17 trajectory that will be destructive to our economy, health and
18 society. Undoing these methane standards is a step backwards
19 for our climate. These standards are cost-effective and
20 functional. These standards are common sense, cost-effective,
21 and feasible pollution controls that do not harm the industry.
22 These standards have been in place for almost a year without
23 adverse economic impacts.

24 EPA's own analysis found these standards achieve
25 significant reductions of methane and other harmful air

1 pollution at low cost. Rolling back EPA's methane pollution
2 standards would be reckless and take us backwards at a time
3 when we can and need to implement solutions to cut methane
4 pollution quicker than ever.

5 This roll back by the Trump Administration fits a
6 pattern of creating loopholes for corporate polluters and
7 putting their interest ahead of those of the American people.
8 It is EPA's obligation to protect all Americans from harmful
9 methane pollution. Any attempt to slow or dismantle standards
10 that cut pollution from the oil and gas industry is a direct
11 assault on our health and our environment.

12 Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

13 MS. ALEXANDRA MERLINO: Good morning. My name is
14 Alexandra Merlino, and I travelled here today from Santa Fe,
15 New Mexico, on behalf of the Partnership for Responsible
16 Business and our business partners throughout the state. I am
17 here to speak out in opposition to Donald Trump and the EPA's
18 Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler's proposed roll back of the
19 EPA's New Source Performance Standards pollution limits that
20 protect Americans from harmful methane pollution.

21 The EPA's proposed roll back of New Source
22 Performance Standard for oil and gas industry is the wrong
23 direction to take in protecting the environment and the public
24 health of our communities. This proposed roll back will hurt
25 communities where these developments exist, and blatantly

1 ignore the EPA's responsibility to protect the health and
2 safety of American families, and it puts the interest of
3 corporation ahead of those and all of American people.

4 So methane also poses a great danger to our planet.
5 We know that methane's warming power is 80 times more than
6 carbon dioxide, making methane a dangerous driver of climate
7 change. And when something is 80 times more harmful, we
8 shouldn't take a wait and see approach. Instead, we should be
9 swift and deliberate and halt the proposed roll back,
10 especially when I know the issue has been so widely discussed,
11 researched, and found to be a significant source of emissions
12 that extremely harmful to our climate and public health. We
13 need climate action today. Instead, this administration is
14 moving in the opposite direction.

15 So I live in a state where the EPA's rule is our
16 only backstop to addressing methane emissions. In New Mexico,
17 we don't have state regulations on methane. We New Mexicans
18 look to the EPA to help set the baseline and provide a road
19 map. We have seen how strong methane rules that are being met
20 in other states like Colorado, where oil and gas companies
21 implemented measures for leak detection and repairs to meet the
22 standards and they are being successful, their core business
23 isn't being affected.

24 In fact, Colorado's crude oil production has
25 quadrupled since 2010, and Colorado is among the major -- one

1 of the major natural gas producers in the nation. Leading oil
2 and gas producers such as Exxon and XTO say they want to move
3 forward on efforts to reduce methane pollution.

4 So I am going to read a few quotes straight from
5 their website. "ExxonMobil is committed to doing our part to
6 contribute to cleaner air in the communities where we operate
7 by reducing our air emissions. We are working to reduce air
8 emissions associated with our projects, operations and the
9 products we delivered through initiatives, including major
10 capital investments, implementation of cost-effective new
11 technology and adoption of creative new operating practices.

12 In some cases, these reductions are driven by
13 regulation." So I want to repeat that. "In some cases these
14 reductions are driven by regulations." So it's no wonder why
15 ExxonMobil and other forward thinking companies haven't spoken
16 in support of these rules, nor have they asked their trade
17 associations to stop supporting the roll backs.

18 The ExxonMobil website goes on to say that over the
19 past ten years their release of VOC's, and sulfur dioxide, and
20 nitrogen dioxide, have decreased by 31 percent. And they have
21 new air measurement technology where they can more easily
22 monitor the air in the communities where their facilities are
23 running, and then they are making that data publicly available
24 to local communities.

25 So this is great for improving the health of the

1 local communities and the environment. And ExxonMobil should
2 be really proud of this, but it's hard for us to know which of
3 these achievements were driven by regulations. So while a
4 select few of oil and gas companies are meeting the challenges
5 and accepting the regulations as a core practice of being a
6 responsible business, the fact that they are not speaking up
7 reiterates that the regulations provide innovation and that we
8 cannot rely on self regulation to profit -- to protect our
9 health and environment from an industry that consistently puts
10 profits ahead of the health and the environment of the
11 American -- the health of the American people and our
12 environment.

13 So these proposed roll backs would halt innovation,
14 put our communities and vulnerable populations at further risk
15 from dangers of methane emissions and turn a blind eye to an
16 air emission that accelerates climate impact, not mitigates
17 them.

18 Sometimes showing and knowing the dangers of
19 something isn't enough to curb our appetite from it. Sometimes
20 it takes a set of catastrophic events before we regulate to
21 address those dangers. We knew that putting speed limits on
22 our roads and highways would place our population in less
23 dangerous situations, and it worked. We don't have the luxury
24 of driving as fast because we know it's unsafe, not just for
25 us, but the people around us, and that is what the methane rule

1 is to me, it says that we have to keep measures in place to
2 mitigate the need by which dangerous emissions are being
3 released into the environment. When something is 80 times more
4 potent to our environment, that's like driving 80 miles per
5 hour in a residential community.

6 We can't wait until something catastrophic
7 happens -- or something more catastrophic happens, right, until
8 it jars us to regulate it more responsibly. We know the
9 dangers and impacts of methane already. We must say no to
10 misguided roll backs and keep the methane rules strong and
11 intact.

12 Thank you for your time.

13 MR. FRUH: Thank you. Could you spell your last
14 name?

15 MS. ALEXANDRA MERLINO: Sure. It's M-E-R-L-I-N-O.

16 MR. FRUH: We will now call Speaker Number 53.

17 MS. VELMA CAMPBELL: Good morning. I think it's
18 still morning. Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments
19 and input on the proposed regulatory changes. And my name is
20 Velma Campbell. I am a Medical Doctor board certified in
21 occupational and environmental medicine. I am from Pueblo,
22 Colorado. And I am speaking today in opposition to the
23 proposed changes.

24 When I reviewed the proposed changes and the
25 justification offered for the -- for the changes, I found that

1 there was no obvious -- I couldn't find anyway, any obvious
2 environmental or economic need for changes in the existing
3 regulations.

4 After all, EPA's customer is the American public,
5 not the regulated industries. When regulatory changes reduce
6 protective efforts for the public reported savings, which were
7 the only rational that I could find for the regulation being
8 changed are really cost shifting to the taxpayers from private
9 industry, including public health concerns, such as costs of
10 health care and absences from work.

11 When regulatory -- sorry, these proposed changes
12 from existing regulations do represent a crossroads of public
13 health and economics. And in contrast to the cost shifting
14 that the proposed regulations would accomplish, there are
15 significant historical -- there is significant historical
16 evidence that when regulations are in place and are enforced,
17 mitigation and innovation often drive job creation and move
18 industry forward both in productivity and in economic balance.

19 There is sufficient references in the medical
20 literature and the research literature to indicate that risks
21 to human health related to oil and gas operations can be
22 identified with air emissions, which come from equipment as
23 well as from operation.

24 So first, the reduction of inspection frequency
25 that's proposed is likely to result in increased emissions from

1 delay in identification of malfunctioning or leaking equipment.
2 While methane is the theme of this hearing for many, it is
3 important to realize that methane is not the only substance of
4 concern from inadequately maintained equipment.

5 Other concerns include VOCs and hazardous chemicals
6 associated with multiple human health defects. So by virtue of
7 then enforcing the current regulatory level, protection of
8 public health from a wide range of answers may be accomplished.
9 This is an indication of efficient regulation.

10 Furthermore, and secondly, use of a waiver program
11 for older equipment -- use of the waiver program for older
12 equipment to avoid upgrading that equipment is inappropriate
13 and results in protracted unnecessary emissions. Rather than
14 widening the availability of waiver options, EPA should add
15 requirements making a deadline for the equipment which is
16 waived or grandfathered to be brought into compliance.

17 Finally, I would like to thank the EPA for having a
18 public hearing on this subject. And I would like to formally
19 request, due to the wide ranging potential effects of this --
20 this proposed change, which has been presented as a mere
21 technical modification, but, in fact, has wide-ranging
22 potential effects, I would like to formally request an
23 extension of the comment period. And during that time frame to
24 add public hearing sites since this hearing, while being held
25 at a somewhat centralized location, is actually far, far away

1 from many of the affected communities.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. FRUH: I will now call Speaker Number 54.

4 MS. JESSICA LOYA: Hello. Good morning. My name
5 is Jessica Loya. And I am the National Policy Director for
6 Green Latinos. We are a national network of Latino
7 environmental and conservation advocates that believe that
8 every community has a right to live in an environmentally just,
9 healthy, and vibrant community. We represent Latinos and their
10 families in ensuring that our federal environmental policies
11 like the proposed amendment to the 2016 New Source Performance
12 Standards take into account the impact on the health and
13 well-being of our communities and the environment.

14 This mission is very similar to that of the
15 Environmental Protection Agency, which is to quote, "Protect
16 human health and the environment." However, at times like
17 today, we find that the EPA is not keeping to its mission and
18 the policies and regulations that they seek to implement.

19 The current proposal seeks to do the opposite by
20 putting the interest of oil and gas industries ahead of human
21 health and the environment in efforts to, quote, Significantly
22 decrease unnecessary burdens on domestic energy producers, end
23 quote.

24 Latino communities across the country know first
25 hand the burden that the oil and gas industry impose on our

1 community by their work. Green Latinos is here today to remind
2 you, the EPA, of your mission and duty to protect the health of
3 all Americans.

4 In 2015 Green Latinos, along with 15 other Latino
5 community organizations, including the National Hispanic
6 Medical Association, Hispanic Federation, the League of United
7 Latin American Citizens, and others, representing more than a
8 million Latinos wrote a letter to the EPA when the original
9 standards were being proposed.

10 This letter called for the EPA to implement strong
11 regulations and rules to reduce the emission of harmful air
12 pollutants like methane gas from new and existing sources using
13 its authority under the Clean Air Act. Strong regulations of
14 these harmful air pollutants would directly improve the health
15 and well-being of more than 1.7 million Latinos who live in
16 areas where toxic air pollution from oil and gas facilities is
17 so high that the cancer risks due to this alone exceeds EPA's
18 levels of concern.

19 And the 1.8 million Latino individuals who live
20 within a half mile of an oil and gas facility, and those within
21 that half mile have cause for concern about potential health
22 impacts from oil and gas toxic pollution. Additionally, it
23 would help Latinos and Americans across the country who are
24 experiencing the devastating impact of climate change that are
25 exacerbated by the pollution of methane from the oil and gas

1 industry.

2 The 2016 methane standards rose to the call by
3 Latino communities sent in this letter. It demonstrated that
4 the U.S. EPA understood the importance of protecting
5 communities' health and acting to combat climate change.

6 Today we are here once again on behalf of those
7 organizations and communities to call on the EPA to put
8 community health first. A recent Yale study found that more
9 than a half -- more than half Latinos, 53 percent say they that
10 personally experience the effects of climate change and have a
11 vested interest, 74 percent, in seeing President Trump and his
12 administration, which would include the EPA, to do more to
13 address climate change.

14 The health and well-being of Latino communities and
15 all Americans across the country is at stake. Pollution knows
16 no boundaries, and it does not care whom it endangers. Poor
17 air quality results in 750,000 summertime asthma attacks in
18 Latino children, 500,000 missed school days. Among adults,
19 this pollution results in 2,000 asthma-related emergency
20 visits, 600 hospital admissions and 1.5 million reduced
21 activity days.

22 Moreover, climate change is destroying our
23 community and homes. Whether it be the intense floods due to
24 hurricanes in Texas or North Carolina, or the more than 3,000
25 deaths due to the impact of Hurricane Maria to the American

1 people of Puerto Rico.

2 We call on the EPA to maintain and fully implement
3 the 2016 New Source Performance Standards and reject these
4 proposed amendments to weaken or roll back the common sense
5 public health oriented policies that are in place today.

6 Thank you for your time and your work to protect
7 communities across America.

8 MR. FRUH: Thank you. Could you please spell your
9 name for the record. I don't think we got that.

10 MS. JESSICA LOYA: Yes. My name is Jessica Loya,
11 L-O-Y-A.

12 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

13 MR. FRUH: Thank you. And as a reminder, we talked
14 about this in the morning, but a new crowd of people are here.
15 When you come up to provide your comments, please state your
16 name and then spell your last name for the record so your
17 comments are documented correctly.

18 With that we will go to Speaker Number 55.

19 MS. JERI CHRIST-JAMER: Good morning. My name is
20 Jeri Christ hyphen Jamer, and my last name is spelled
21 C-H-R-I-S-T-J-A-M-E-R. And first, I want to say thank you for
22 having the hearing. I am an environmental advocate and utility
23 reform advocate who engages in public policy at the public
24 utilities commissions through proceedings in California and in
25 Colorado, and have for several years now.

1 I live in Berthoud primarily. And I wanted to say,
2 first, that I testified at the original CO2 hearings where
3 these methane rules were modelled after, and was very proud
4 that Colorado implemented those -- those regulations, and to
5 see that the federal government took notice and -- and, you
6 know, followed.

7 I really feel that rolling back these regulations
8 are not only unconscionable from a climate standpoint, but it's
9 also a way waste of resource. And, you know, I've spoken to
10 people in the oil and gas industry who, you know, originally
11 thought that this might really have a very large impact on the
12 industry, but as others have testified, we are seeing, you
13 know, a great amount of success in this area in our state and
14 elsewhere despite these regulations.

15 I also wanted to say, and to be, you know, fully
16 honest about my -- my situation, I have released my minerals
17 and I am being fracked as we speak from a few miles away over
18 in Weld County. I have vowed to put the -- any proceeds that I
19 ever get from my -- my leasing of those minerals towards
20 attorneys' fees to engage in climate protection and utility
21 reform in both states.

22 I also wanted to say that the -- I have noticed
23 that the air quality in the Front Range since I moved to
24 Colorado is just -- you know, I just have to think back to what
25 it used to be because there is only, you know, a very small

1 percentage of days that are as clear as it used to be when I
2 moved here 30 or 40 years ago.

3 And ozone, I think, is a tremendous concern. So,
4 you know, the ozone emissions being in Berthoud at the end of
5 the Basin, you know, we generally have felt that we are free of
6 it, but I have woken up in the middle of the night and swear I
7 can smell the ozone from -- if I open my windows. I have
8 learned to keep my windows shut at night in the summertime in
9 the last few years, and that's the Front Range all together.

10 And also, I will leave with another thought. I
11 spoke to my daughter who lives in Vallejo, California, not too
12 far from the Richmond refineries, and just not -- a bit over a
13 hundred miles from the terrible fire in Northern California,
14 the Camp Fire. And not only can she smell the smoke when she
15 leaves her house, but she had to, within recent history, had to
16 shelter in place because of emissions from, you know, just, you
17 know, accidental emissions from the Richmond refinery.

18 And if anything, I think we need to tighten
19 registrations on the -- or regulations on the industry. We
20 have certainly seen a lot of success, and this -- it just
21 seems, you know, nonsensical to roll these regulations back
22 when we are making progress. And there should be more
23 partnering with the industry to help to clean up the
24 environment that we are sadly seeing the effect of.

25 So thank you for your time and attention.

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1 MR. FRUH: Next, Speaker Number 56.

2 MS. CHRISTINA MAGEAU: Hello. My name is Christina
3 Mageau, and I will definitely spell that for you, it's
4 M-A-G-E-A-U. So I want to start out by just thanking you for
5 your time today and listening to everyone.

6 I am a 32 year old woman. I live in Denver and I
7 educate children in Jefferson County. I'm here for the
8 children, for everyone in our communities, for really our whole
9 country to oppose this.

10 We need strong safeguards against methane and other
11 climate disrupting pollutants. We need to protect our health,
12 our environment, and our climate. The children deserve to
13 breathe clean air so that they can live their lives and reach
14 their full potential.

15 One of the children that I educate has asthma. And
16 I know others who have asthma as well, and I know that clean
17 air is incredibly important to all of us, especially those who
18 already struggle. Every day I see him use his inhaler so he
19 can play outside and make sure he gets his full physical
20 education, but he has had asthma attacks, and he has had to
21 miss school from it. And I don't want to see the air get worse
22 and make it more difficult for him, or for anyone else.

23 Without his inhaler he wouldn't be able to breathe
24 properly. Without clean air, none of us can breathe properly.
25 I don't want any children or adults to stop breathing. I also

1 don't want any of us to lose access to clean air. We need
2 clean air to live, survive and thrive. We need to make sure we
3 are protecting our environment and our country.

4 Do not weaken methane safeguards because this would
5 put children's health at risk and it would worsen our climate
6 crisis. Climate change has been getting out of control for a
7 while, and I keep seeing it get worse and worse and we need to
8 focus on protections.

9 Over a 20-year time period methane warms the planet
10 87 times as much as CO2. We cannot allow climate change to get
11 out of control anymore than it already has. We cannot allow
12 our air to get worse. I have had the same clean air issues
13 that the last speaker was talking about.

14 Think of the children, all of our communities and
15 our world. Protect all of us so that we can all live happy,
16 healthy lives. Protect our planet and all of us.

17 Thank you for your time.

18 MR. FRUH: Next speaker is Number 57.

19 MS. MARIE VENNER: My name is Marie Venner, that's
20 V- as in Victor, E-N-N-E-R. I am here speaking on behalf of
21 multiple organizations today, Interfaith Power and Light, which
22 is a large network of faith-based communities and Catholic
23 network dot U.S., and also Call to Action. I am also a
24 Chairperson of the National Academies Transportation Research
25 Board. I chair the Climate Change Energy and Sustainability

1 Sub-committee, AF 100, AF 0001, rather. And I can also speak
2 on behalf of -- I am from an agricultural family on one side
3 and have been in Colorado for three generations.

4 On behalf of Colorado faith communities I am here
5 today to widely oppose pollution of our environment, our common
6 home, and favor action on climate change. Around 75 percent of
7 people nationally favor action of climate change. EPA's job is
8 to protect our air and water, not only for those of us able to
9 vote, but for those of us who can't, like children and the
10 unborn future generations.

11 You have heard from many of us here today how EPA
12 could and should be doing a better job in this area, including
13 not rolling back the 2016 rule. There are over 1,200 health
14 studies now, about three times as many as when New York State
15 began fracking. The health effects are striking, and we rely
16 on the U.S. EPA to protect us from the affects.

17 The methane leakage is so bad in some parts of our
18 state, such as the Four Corners area, that it can be viewed
19 from space. So much more needs to be done to control leakage
20 and protect those who are suffering, especially those who are
21 on the front lines, an 8-hour drive from this hearing. Hear
22 our plea today to not ignore them and to care for our common
23 home.

24 I also want to draw your attention to a recent very
25 clear statement recorded even in a headline article in the

1 Guardian this -- last week, that we cannot afford to continue
2 to build any further emitting infrastructure. Chief economist
3 and now lead of the International Energy Agency, a consulting
4 body to the oil industry initially described this lock-in from
5 what we buy and what is built, including drilling rigs, coal
6 and gas plants, and our cars and trucks in 2011.

7 I have done work with the International Energy
8 Agency. What we have built already from cars and trucks, power
9 plants and mines, will already take us over two degrees celsius
10 if operated for its full lifetime, which we'll do unless we
11 don't care about the waste or cost, though the damage is
12 becoming more apparent every day.

13 There is a better way forward for our air and
14 water, and that is renewable energy, which is now more
15 affordable in Colorado than any state in the union. We found
16 from Exxon bids last fall, it's cheaper than continuing to
17 operate coal and gas plants. This is not the time to double
18 down in waste and emissions from gas.

19 So once again, there is a better way forward for
20 our air and water, and that is renewable energy, storage and
21 electric vehicles. People who think, beg U.S. EPA to elevate
22 the public interest and protection of air and water, instead of
23 profit and pollution. Please live up to your duty to protect.

24 And I just want to add a personal note at the end
25 here. Having grown up in the metro area I have seen how the

1 pollution has evolved since 1970. And after the initial
2 improvements in 1970, it -- you know, it really has gotten
3 worse. And I was surprised moving from Littleton to Jefferson
4 County to find that that is one of the most ozone polluted
5 areas in the state. Maybe it's wider.

6 But my mom is already on oxygen, and my son has --
7 has asthma and he is also on the autism spectrum. You know,
8 they have connected now autism to exposure to these pollutants.
9 So I ask you to take this more seriously than it has been taken
10 to date. And also, please look into the now 20 percent of
11 Alzheimer's cases are connected to air pollution as well. So
12 this is not trivial. It's time. I would be glad to submit a
13 compendium of health studies.

14 Is there an e-mail where I can send that?

15 MR. FRUH: You can send it to the docket. And we
16 can provide that.

17 MS. FULTON: We can get you the docket after.

18 MS. MARIE VENNER: All right. Okay. Thanks very
19 much. You know, this is a -- you know, this is an urgent day
20 in and day out issue. I am very grateful to the teacher who
21 came and spoke as well. You know, a lot of people are making a
22 lot of sacrifices to get here today, and I came from the
23 hospital to come and speak. So please hear us.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. FRUH: Thank you. We have no more scheduled

1 speakers prior to the break for lunch. So we will go ahead and
2 break now and reconvene at 1:00 p.m.

3 Thank you.

4 (Short break, 12:50 p.m. to 2:06 p.m.)

5 (The following session is being heard by EPA Panel
6 members Gail Fallon, Virginia Sorrell and Melissa Weitz.)

7 MS. GAIL FALLON: Good afternoon. My name is Gail
8 Fallon, I am the Acting Air Monitoring Unit Chief here in EPA's
9 Region 8. I am one of the Chairs for the today's public
10 hearing on the EPA's Proposed Target Improvements to the 2016
11 New Source Performance Standards, or NSPS, for the Oil and Gas
12 Industry. Welcome and thank you for coming today.

13 Joining me on the panel are Virginia Sorrell and
14 Melissa Weitz. Today's hearing is an opportunity for the
15 public to offer input on the proposed amendments. The proposal
16 included changes to the frequency for monitoring fugitive
17 emissions, also known as leaks at well sites and compressor
18 stations. The requirement for pneumatic pumps at well sites
19 and requirements of a professional engineer certified when
20 meeting those requirements is technically infeasible.

21 In addition, this proposal addresses implementation
22 issues and makes technical corrections and amendments to
23 further clarify the rule.

24 I would like to thank you for taking your time and
25 having you here today to just us and share your comments.

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1 Ground rules: We have a lot of people signed up to
2 speak, and we want to hear from everyone. Before we begin I
3 would like to go through some ground rules that will help make
4 today's hearing run smoothly.

5 First, please be sure you have checked in at a
6 registration desk, even if you are not planning to speak today.
7 If you signed up to speak but haven't told us that you're here,
8 please step out to the registration desk and let the EPA staff
9 there know that you've arrived.

10 Second, if you are a speaker, you were given a room
11 letter when you checked in; Room A, Bitterroot, or Room B,
12 Bison. This is Room B. Are you in the right room? If not,
13 this is a good time to make your way to the other room.

14 Here is how today's hearing will work. If you are
15 a speaker you were given a speaker number when you checked in,
16 one, two, three, four or so on. When your number is called,
17 please come to the front of the room near the podium. There
18 are chairs available for you to wait your turn to speak.

19 When it's your turn to speak, please come to the
20 podium, state your name and spell it for the court reporter.
21 Your comments will be transcribed and included in the record of
22 comments on these actions.

23 Each speaker will have five minutes to give
24 comments. We have a light that will let you know how much time
25 you have left to speak. When the light turns from green to

1 yellow, that means you have one minute remaining. When it
2 turns red, that's a signal to wrap up your testimony. The
3 light will flash red when you have spoken for five minutes and
4 it's time to stop.

5 We are here to listen to you today; however, a
6 panel member may ask you questions to clarify your comments.
7 When you are finished speaking, I will call up the next speaker
8 by number. If you brought a written copy of your testimony,
9 please give that to the staff at the registration desk before
10 you leave today. Because of the large number of people who
11 have signed up to speak today, and to be fair to everyone, we
12 are going to strictly enforce the five minute limit. If you
13 have additional comments you would like to make, you may submit
14 them in writing.

15 Let me assure you that EPA gives equal
16 consideration to comments we receive in writing as to those
17 presented at a public hearing. Instructions for submitting
18 materials to the docket are available at the registration desk
19 and on EPA's website. Comments must be received on or before
20 December 17th, 2018. Any written comment submitted today will
21 be placed in the official docket for the proposed amendments.

22 Today's hearing will conclude at 8:00 p.m. We will
23 take short breaks throughout the day as needed. If you have
24 any questions during the day, please see the registration table
25 staff.

1 Finally, I want to ask each of you to please be
2 respectful of everyone who speaks today. We have people with a
3 wide variety of views in the audience and we want to hear from
4 all of you. So that we can do that, and to be fair to
5 everyone, we ask that everyone listen quietly, even applause
6 can slow things down and we want to hear from everyone who is
7 signed up to speak.

8 Please put your phones on silent so that every
9 speaker can be heard by the panel without distraction.

10 Thank you again for taking the time today to share
11 your comments on EPA's actions. So let's get started.

12 We are starting with Speaker Number 61, but if
13 anyone has a lower number than that, we can take you first.

14 So Number 61, please come up to the podium.

15 MR. EDWARD ARNOLD: My name is Edward, Arnold,
16 A-R-N-O-L-D is the last name. I came down here from Boulder.
17 Thank you for this opportunity. I will keep this brief.

18 There are three things I would like to say. I am
19 72 years old. I grew up in Los Angeles in the 1950s and early
20 1960s. My memory of those times was not being able to see --
21 on some days not being able to see more than a few hundred
22 yards in front of me. When I was ten years old I would go out
23 to play as a child and I would have to come inside because the
24 pain in my lungs was so terrible. I don't want to see a return
25 to those days, methane is a pollutant.

1 The second thing I would like to remind you about
2 is that I'm -- I'm the parent of a child with quadriplegic
3 cerebral palsy. That makes me very aware of the vulnerable
4 people in our population who have a lot of trouble breathing.
5 And to them air quality is a matter of life.

6 The third thing I would like to mention is that I
7 am a business associate and friend of Robert Henson, who wrote
8 a book titled Thinking Mans -- A Thinking Person's Guide to
9 Climate Change. Bob has recently done an upgrade of his book,
10 a rewrite. He is a very meticulous science journalist in
11 atmospheric science and he has made -- he's altered his book
12 with a number of comments about methane. I will just repeat
13 very briefly one of them.

14 Methane, for example, is shorter lived than CO2,
15 but more powerful in its ability to trap heat in the
16 atmosphere, thus over a century's time, and he is talking about
17 a century here, methane's global warming potential is estimated
18 to be somewhere between 30 and 35, that is 30 and 35 times the
19 effect of CO2.

20 And this information is based on his conversations
21 with literally hundreds of scientists. He knows most of the
22 atmospheric scientists in the U.S., and many of them all
23 around the world. To me, that's quite alarming. And I have
24 heard it -- I have heard it on short time scales because
25 methane has a shorter half-life than CO2. The global warming

1 potential of it can be higher than 35 under certain conditions.

2 Okay.

3 So thank you.

4 MS. GAIL FALLON: Thank you, Mr. Arnold.

5 Do we have a Speaker Number 62?

6 MS. KATELYN SIEGRIST: My name is Katelyn Siegrist.

7 And thanks for allowing me to speak today. This is my first
8 time. So I am a 31-year-old single, white, middle-class
9 childless woman who was raised in a Republican Catholic
10 household by two heterosexual parents. So in short, I am as
11 basic as they come. I have lived in Denver since 2016, after I
12 earned my Ph.D. in Occupational Environmental Health Sciences
13 at West Virginia University. I fell in love with Colorado and
14 I don't plan on leaving any time soon. I want to make Colorado
15 my new home.

16 I am currently employed as a postdoctoral fellow at
17 a major academic research institution in Aurora, Colorado
18 researching the toxicological effects of chemicals in
19 secondhand smoke and how they cause lung cancer. Yes, we still
20 have to study this stuff, unfortunately.

21 You could and should consider me an environmental
22 health expert. I was born and raised in West Virginia with a
23 state known for booming oil and gas industry and there for a
24 while air pollution. I left my home state because they let me
25 down too many times. I considered it my home for almost 30

1 years before I realized it was time to go.

2 I had several reasons. One of the most influential
3 being my concern for the environment and its impact on human
4 health. I landed on Colorado because it reminded me a lot of
5 West Virginia, only it had much bigger mountains and a lot
6 healthier communities. As I said before, I came to the
7 decision to leave my home and mostly throughout grad school,
8 but now as I have had time to reflect on my life back in West
9 Virginia, I kind of always knew I needed to leave.

10 West Virginia is known to have some of the worst
11 pollution, and therefore, the worst health outcomes in our
12 nation. And why is that? The economy and culture revolve
13 around the extraction of carbon-based natural resources from
14 the almost Heaven-like landscape.

15 As a lifelong resident of West Virginia, I watched
16 many of my friends and family struggle tremendously with their
17 health, most notably my sister who suffered her entire life
18 with severe asthma, that is until she moved away.

19 My grandparents lived in a small town in the
20 Northern Panhandle of West Virginia. My grandfather died
21 around age 50 from a massive heart attack, and my grandmother
22 died at 67 from ovarian cancer, both steel mill workers.

23 Throughout grad school I realized that not only did
24 their polluted environment play a huge factor in their living,
25 it could have even been avoided with proper regulations. I am

1 not sure what my grandparent's views would be today, especially
2 concerning their job security which is a valid concern
3 especially in rural communities; however, I would like to think
4 that they would trust me to handle it with the care and
5 diligence it deserved, not just because I am their
6 granddaughter, but because I dedicated my life, moving away
7 from my life, having a child, travelling around the world on
8 hold to understanding the environmental pollutants caused -- or
9 how they cause disease, how it can be managed, and how best to
10 give voices to the wonderful populations that haven't been
11 afforded the same opportunities as myself.

12 I will quickly leave you with a quote by Ralph
13 Waldo Emerson, "The first wealth is health," which I have
14 adopted as my personal mantra. Mr. Emerson was a prominent
15 philosopher of the transcendentalist movement of the 19th
16 century. Briefly, transcendentalism and individual freedom and
17 self-reliance, two things that arguably would be violated by
18 air pollution and some of these methane regulations.

19 That's the problem though since these increases in
20 regulations lead to increased financial burden for the
21 industry, which tends to reduce job security in underserved
22 communities. So you could say that this is a problem. You
23 could also argue that the regulations could lead to reduced
24 individual freedom and self-reliance in and of itself.

25 Well, as an environmental health expert and fellow

1 human being, I am here to tell you that there is absolutely
2 nothing without our help. I believe -- I believe it could be
3 solved -- I believe we could solve just about any major problem
4 we face as an American society with more of an emphasis placed
5 on human self.

6 I left West Virginia believing that Colorado was a
7 healthier place to live and a place where I could raise my
8 family, and my opinion matters. Please don't let me down. Let
9 the economists figure out the rest, but the first wealth is
10 health.

11 MS. GAIL FALLON: Thank you. Number 63.

12 So that would be the end of the list of signed up
13 speakers. So we will take a recess until anybody might come
14 that wants to speak, so we will just standby.

15 (Recess from 2:19 p.m. to 3:06 p.m.)

16 MS. GAIL FALLON: My name is Gail Fallon. I am
17 Acting Air Permitting and Monitoring Unit Chief for EPA Region
18 8. I have been sharing this hearing session today. We do not
19 have anymore registered speakers, but I do want to invite any
20 audience member to speak before we close this hearing.

21 Thank you to everyone who offered testimony today
22 regarding EPA's Proposed Targeted Improvements to the 2016 New
23 Source Performance Standards for the Oil and Gas Industry.

24 This hearing is now adjourned.

25 (End of hearing at 3:07 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

State of Colorado:

SS:

County of Denver:

I, VERONICA A. DRECHSEL, do hereby certify that I am
a Registered Professional Reporter and Certified State Reporter
and Notary Public within the State of Colorado.

I further certify that this hearing was taken in
shorthand by me at the time and place herein set forth and was
thereafter reduced to typewritten form, and that the foregoing
constitutes a true and correct transcript.

I further certify that I am not a related to,
employed by, nor of counsel for any of the parties or attorneys
herein, nor otherwise interested in the result of the within
action.

In witness whereof, I have affixed my signature this
30th day of November, 2018.

Veronica A. Drechsel, RPR, CSR
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Denver, Colorado 80202